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Leo the Great and the Spiritual Rebuilding of a Universal Rome

SUSAN WESSEL

BRILL

Leo the Great and the Spiritual Rebuilding of a Universal Rome

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Early Christian Life and Language

Editors
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Leo the Great and the Spiritual Rebuilding of a Universal Rome

by

Susan Wessel

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For my parents

Raphael, fresco c. 1514, Vatican, "The Meeting between Leo the Great and Attila"

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACO	*Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum*, 4 vols. in 27 parts, ed. E. Schwartz (Berlin, 1914 sqq.); J. Straub (1971); R. Riedinger, Series Secunda (Berlin, 1984–1992)
AHC	*Annuarium Historiae Conciliorum*
ANRW	*Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt. Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung.* (Berlin, New York, 1972 sqq.)
ATA	eds. A.D. Fitzgerald, J. Cavadini, M. Djuth, J.J. O'Donnell, F. Van Fleteren, *Augustine Through the Ages: an encyclopedia*, (Grand Rapids, MI, 1999)
Bury	J.B. Bury, *History of the Later Roman Empire: from the death of Theodosius I to the death of Justinian*, v. 1–2 (New York, 1958)
CCSL	*Corpus Christianorum Series Latina* (Turnhout, 1953 sqq.)
CPG	*Clavis Patrum Graecorum*, ed. M. Geerard, (Turnhout, 1974–1987)
CPL	*Clavis Patrum Latinorum*, 2nd ed., ed. E. Dekkers (Turnhout, 1995)
CSEL	*Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* (Vienna, 1866 sqq.)
CTh	*Codex Theodosianus*, 2 vols. in 3 parts, eds. T. Mommsen, P.M. Meyer (Berlin, 1905); Eng. tr., C. Pharr, *The Theodosian Code and Novels and the Sirmondian Constitutions* (New York, 1969)
DOP	*Dumbarton Oaks Papers*
Fastes	ed. L. Duchesne, *Fastes Épiscopaux de l'ancienne Gaule* (Paris, 1907–1915)
GCS	*Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte*
Jaffé	ed. P. Jaffé, *Regesta Pontificum Romanorum ab condita ecclesia ad annum post Christum natum MCXCVIII* (Leipzig, 1885)
Jalland	T. Jalland, *The Life and Times of St. Leo the Great* (New York, 1941)
JEH	*Journal of Ecclesiastical History*
Joannou	P.-P. Joannou, *Fonti, Discipline générale antique*, (IIe–IXe s.) (Rome, 1962)
Jones	A.H.M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire 284–602*, v. 1–2 (Baltimore, 1964)
JRS	*Journal of Roman Studies*
JTS	*Journal of Theological Studies*
LCL	*Loeb Classical Library*
Liber pont.	*Le Liber pontificalis*, Texte, Introduction et Commentaire, ed. L. Duchesne, 2 vols. (Paris, 1886, 1981)
Mansi	*J.D. Mansi, Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova et Amplissima Collectio*, 31 vols. (Florence, Venice, 1759–1798)

MGH AA	*Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Auctores antiquissimi*, 15 vols. (Berlin, 1826 sqq.)
NPNF	A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, 28 vols. (Buffalo, NY, 1886–1890)
ODB	*The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, ed. A. Kazhdan et al., 3 vols. (New York and Oxford, 1991)
PG	*Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Graeca*, ed. J.P. Migne (Paris, 1857–1866)
PL	*Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Latina*, ed. J.P. Migne (Paris, 1841–1864)
PLS	*Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Latina*, *Supplementum*, ed. A. Hammam
PLRE	*The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire*, ed. A.H.M. Jones, J.R. Martindale et al., 3 vols. (Cambridge, 1971–1992)
Quasten	J. Quasten, *Patrology* i–iv, (Allen, Texas, 1995)
RevSR	*Revue des sciences religieuses*
RHE	*Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique*
RSR	*Recherches de science religieuse*
SC	*Sources Chrétienne* (Paris, 1924 sqq.)
SP	*Studia Patristica*
TU	*Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur. Archiv für die griechisch-christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte* (Leipzig and Berlin, 1882 ff.)
VC	*Vigiliae Christianae*
ZNW	*Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche* (Giessen, Berlin)

INTRODUCTION TO LEO THE GREAT AND THE LATE ROMAN WORLD THAT WAS HIS STAGE

1. *The study of Leo the Great*

What was it about Leo that made him 'the Great'?[1] A distinguished public career as the bishop of Rome (pope, 440–461), a respectable rhetorical education, and a literary production consisting of eloquent sermons and letters placed him among the Roman *intelligentsia*. His intellectual achievement, however, was not of the same order as the greatest Christian minds of the western empire. He did not match the breadth, subtlety, and complexity of thought that was characteristic of Ambrose (d. 397), Jerome (d. 420), or Augustine (d. 430). Nor was he responsible for developing the tradition of spirituality that distinguished the work of the monastic leader John Cassian (d. 435) and his colleagues in southern Gaul. His ideas were dependent upon and embedded in those of his predecessors and contemporaries, making it difficult to distinguish his original contribution from the intellectual and social fabric of the times that influenced him. Given these shortcomings, I might be forgiven for considering the possibility that Leo's accomplishments did not merit the title 'the Great'.

Yet even such a dogged critic of the rise of Christianity as Edward Gibbon (d. 1794) recognized that "[t]he genius of Leo was exercised and displayed in the public misfortunes", and that he "deserved the appellation of Great by the successful zeal with which he labored to establish his opinions and his authority, under the venerable names of orthodox faith and ecclesiastical discipline."[2] Leo's greatness resided for Gibbon mainly in his worldly successes. How, then, should we

[1] I shall refer to Leo alternately as bishop and as pope, the latter being merely an honorary title until the beginning of the seventh century, when it was used formally to designate pope Boniface III in 607. Leo was one of only two popes to receive the title 'the Great', the other being Gregory the Great (pope, 590–604).

[2] E. Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (New York, 1960), c. 35, p. 491.

evaluate his failure to establish a lasting unity with the eastern orthodox churches, whose rejection of the Council of Chalcedon (451), which Leo orchestrated, was the occasion for the eastern schism? What does it mean for Leo to have established "his opinions and his authority" if that authority was rejected by a significant portion of the churches? Although he was commonly known as the doctor of Christian unity, in the light of his failure to achieve that unity his greatness cannot be measured solely by his objective accomplishments. Viewed in this way, Leo's greatness might seem elusive and his significance incapable of being measured precisely. This does not suggest that his title should be rescinded, but that the measure of his greatness should be viewed through a different lens.

Probing Leo's letters and sermons for his understanding of himself and his mission brings his greatness into sharper focus. From the tenor of his writings it is apparent that he perceived his life as a Roman bishop as being deeply interconnected with the politics and social world of his contemporaries. The words he spoke, the letters he wrote, and the meetings he arranged served his single-minded purpose of shaping that world—a world on the verge of political crisis—according to his theological views. Leo was 'the Great', as I shall argue below, because he confidently brought his model of a compassionate, feeling Christ to bear upon the anxieties that his congregations suffered in the light of the barbarian invasions. Politics and theology coalesced profoundly.

I am not the first to have considered the magnitude of Leo's greatness. Two major studies of Leo, Jalland's *Life and Times of St. Leo the Great* (1941) and McShane's *La Romanitas et le Pape Léon le Grand* (1979), explain his achievement by differently situating its object of study.[3] For Jalland, Leo was a *tour de force* amid a sea of mediocrity, the strength of his character alone having imbued the church organization and the office of the papacy with the confidence and stability that made it thrive during the advance of the barbarian kingdoms and the menacing presence of the Byzantines.[4] He left a legacy of vigorous adherence to the governing principles of the church, which were grounded in the belief that the bishop of Rome physically embodied St. Peter and was his living representative. This assessment was quite different from the short biography

[3] T. Jalland, *Life and Times of St. Leo the Great* (New York, 1941); P. McShane, *La Romanitas et le Pape Léon le Grand: l'apport culturel des institutions impériales à la formation des structures ecclésiastiques* (Tournai, Montreal, 1979).

[4] Jalland, p. 73.

of Leo written by Gore (1897), which viewed the papacy as a truncated institution whose development of one idea, that of government, came at the expense of justice, equity, consideration, humility, freedom, and universal consent, "and had latent in it, even in Leo's day, the prophecy of the Reformation."[5] Jalland could not have disagreed more: Leo's greatness consisted in the strength and honor of his person, by which he decisively assumed the prerogatives of the papal office that he inherited from his predecessors. Papal authority was, nevertheless, problematic for Jalland because no historical evidence supported such wide-ranging authority among the early bishops, the powers that Leo attributed to Peter having "replaced real history with something little short of fantasy."

The possibility that intellectual ideas or 'fantasy', as Jalland put it derisively, could be a positive force in shaping history was explored by McShane. He argued that the spirit of Rome, the principles of *romanitas* that defined the Roman temperament, its *gravitas*, *constantia*, *firmitas*, *disciplina*, *aequitas*, *clementia*, and *severitas*, profoundly shaped Leo's writings, his character, his way of perceiving the role of the church in the world.[6] Embedded in the institutions, cultures, and ideas of the Roman way of life, the Leo that emerges from McShane's study is not the lone genius that Jalland envisioned. He is rather the last great pope of the ancient world whose abiding commitment to everything Roman infused the church organization that he helped fashion with the *romanitas* that he embodied. Leo did not Romanize the church according to McShane, because the church was already a product of the Roman world that was its historical *milieu* and in which its administrative structures unfolded. What distinguished him from the bishops of the late Roman world was his capacity to perceive the church as suffused with the same spirit of Rome that he himself expressed.

Although I am indebted to and influenced by both studies, neither acknowledges what I consider to be essential for understanding Leo's significance. He was profoundly aware that his actions and ideas could respond to the world in crisis. He also understood that the papacy needed to change in order for the western church to expand its author-

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[5] C. Gore, *Leo the Great* (London, New York, 1897), p. 127.

[6] The word 'romanitas' originated with Tertullian, who distanced himself from the ideals that it represented. M. Edwards, "*Romanitas* and the Church of Rome," in eds. S. Swain, M. Edwards, *Approaching Late Antiquity: The Transformation from Early to Late Empire* (Oxford, 2004), p. 188.

ity in the light of the advancing barbarian kingdoms. Strikingly, he effected this transformation not only at the practical level of church organization, but in the more fluid realm of thought and idea. The intellectual and spiritual world that Leo and his contemporaries fashioned, therefore, will be of great interest in unearthing the subtle contours of this transformation.

My approach derives from the idea of *romanitas* that McShane identified, but also departs from it in recognizing that Leo had in mind something rather different from the secular conception of Rome with which he was familiar. *Romanitas* for Leo was no longer synonymous with the pagan stock of personified virtues, including *iustitia*, *pax*, *fides*, *fortuna*, *concordia*, *salus*, *securitas*, *victoria*, and *pietas*, that the state exemplified and extended to each of its citizens.[7] Because those virtues had failed to protect Rome from the Goths in 410, from the Vandals in 452, and to contain the onslaught of the barbarian migrations, a new set of ideas emerged. Augustine had grappled with the problem in his *De civitate Dei*, by removing divine providence from the unfolding of secular history and postponing the realization of God's 'city' to the endtime. Leo, however, made that 'city of God' real. His comprehensive view of the world borrowed the mechanism of secular *romanitas* and infused it with a Christian content. *Romanitas*, in Leo's hands, was no longer the patriotic idea that Roman culture and institutions were bound together by a political ideology that reached the far-flung corners of the empire. It embodied a Christian interpretation of the world that he incorporated into his ideology of ecclesiastical unity. That is how he responded to the changing political circumstances in which socio-cultural disorder and chaos were the reality of late Roman life.[8]

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[7] F. Paschoud, *Roma aeterna. études sur le patriotisme romain dans l'Occident latin à l'époque des grandes invasions* (Rome, 1967), p. 323.

[8] Under the patronage of the imperial family Leo transformed the architectural landscape of the city: he restored the basilica of St. Peter; he adorned its entrance with a mosaic; he improved the decoration in the interior of its apse; he founded a monastery nearby; and he appointed guards (known as *cubicularii*) to protect its treasury. He decorated the Church of St. Paul with a triumphal arch; restored the roof of the church; and provided for a fresh supply of water for the *cantharus* in the *atrium*. He was also responsible for building the Church of St. Stephen on the *Via Latina*. List taken from Jalland, pp. 51–52. On this imperial and ecclesiastical collaboration, see A. Gillett, "Rome, Ravenna and the Emperors," *Papers of the British School at Rome* 69 (2001), p. 145, n. 54. On the changing topography in the fourth century, see generally L. Grig, "Portraits, Pontiffs and the Christianization of Fourth-Century Rome," *Papers of the British School at Rome* 72 (2004), pp. 203–230; J.R. Curran, *Pagan City and Christian Capital. Rome in the Fourth Century* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 116–157; and on the pagan/Christian

During Leo's papacy the Vandals were ensconced in northern Africa, the Suevi in Spain, and the Goths in southwestern Gaul; the Alans and Burgundians controlled the western Alps, while the Anglos, Saxons, and Jutes took Great Britain; the north of Gaul became a Frankish possession, the Ostrogoths occupied half of the diocese of Pannonia (on the western river of the Danube), and the Huns devastated the western and eastern provinces.[9] The result of these dramatic settlements was not only the material devastation that the barbarian presence inflicted upon the land, but a pervasive sense of disorder, as the Roman imperial apparatus gradually receded. Leo, whose letters and sermons never conveyed a message of pessimism or despair, responded to this crisis of order, as well as to the psychological toll it must have taken.

His new way of imagining the world was grounded in his conception of the Passion of Christ: Christ had cured the emotion ('affectus') of human weakness ('infirmitas'), anxiety ('metus'), and suffering by fully participating in and experiencing such human failings on the Cross. Leo preached this message to his congregations on Palm Sunday, 5 April 442, shortly after the Vandals conquered North Africa and ravaged the Mediterranean.[10] The suffering, death, and resurrection of the Christ that Leo envisioned had the potential to erase not only human mortality, but also the everyday human afflictions that were increasingly the result of imperial crisis. This way of construing the Passion suggests that he was deeply interested in the control and understanding of human emotions and suffering and the role they play in the mysterious processes of life and death.

How such an interest inspired Leo's vision of a Christian renewal of Rome[11] at a time of political disorder will be explored by considering his altruistic concern for justice and humanitarian care. His thoughts on christology and the person of Christ; on church organization and discipline; on poverty and the care of the poor; on justice, ecclesias-

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synthesis in the city of Corinth in the late empire, see R. Rothaus, "Christianization and Depaganization: The Late Antique Creation of a Conceptual Frontier," in eds. R.W. Mathisen, H.S. Sivan, *Shifting Frontiers in Late Antiquity* (Aldershot, UK, Brookfield, VT 1996), p. 305.

[9] This description of the geo-political conditions is taken from C. Bartnik, "L'interprétation théologique de la crise de l'Empire romain par Léon le Grand," *RHE* 63 (1968), pp. 747–748.

[10] Leo, *Serm.* 54.4: 'nostrae infirmitatis affectus participando curabat, et poenalis experientiae metum subeundo pellebat.' "He cured the emotion of our infirmity by participating in it; he drove away the anxiety in the experience of suffering by undergoing it." *CCSL* 138a, p. 320, lines 74–76.

[11] R.A. Markus, *The End of Ancient Christianity* (Cambridge, 1990), p. 127.

tical law, and mercy; on the primacy of Rome; and on the theology of history will be considered. These were the major ideas of Leo's papacy that filled his conception of a spiritual city, ideas that he drew from such distinguished predecessors and contemporaries as Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine, and Prosper of Aquitaine (d. after 455).[12] These were the same ideas that made his ideology of ecclesiastical unity both compelling and legitimate. 'Compelling' because the humanitarian vision that these ideas embodied addressed the real needs of a society whose way of life was under siege, and 'legitimate' because his conception of unity was thereby infused with moral content. Through this humanitarian vision, Leo extended the secular idea of Rome as the center of empire to the spiritual idea of the Roman world as the 'city of God'.[13] During a time of political disorder this new way of imagining the world imbued Roman ideas and institutions with a Christian content that could conceivably endure beyond the demise of imperial Rome.

Determining when Leo borrowed these ideas and how he adapted them will serve as a window into his mentality and into that of the late Roman catholic *intelligentsia*, thereby revealing the creativity and relevance of his thought. Beneath this method lies a deeper ambiguity. How and to what extent did Leo resolve the tension between preserving the past that was his theological legacy and transforming it subtly to address the new geopolitical reality that was the condition of life in the late Roman world? Remember that for him and his contemporaries, the very concept of intellectual change was anathema to an ideology committed to the view that change never took place. In a Christian society that valued tradition and maintaining continuity with the past, change and innovation were certainly not qualities prized in a bishop. When intellectual changes did occur, the new ideas were to be expressed in language that made them seem to be consistent and continuous with those from the past.[14] Sometimes, as in the case of the christological controversies of the East, that meant using whatever cul-

[12] On the transformation of *romanitas* into *Christianitas* in the context of the fourth-century liturgy, see M.K. Lafferty, "Translating Faith from Greek to Latin: *Romanitas* and *Christianitas* in Late Fourth-Century Rome and Milan," *Journal of Early Christian Studies*, 11, 1 (2003), pp. 21–62.

[13] Of course, Leo himself did not use this phrase of Augustine's, but was perhaps influenced by it in formulating this new way of seeing the world.

[14] E.A. Clark, "Creating Foundations, Creating Authorities: Reading Practices and Christian Identities," in eds. J. Frishman, W. Otten, G. Rouwhorst, *Religious Identity and the Problem of Historical Foundation* (Leiden, Boston, 2004), pp. 564–568.

tural resources were available, including the style, tropes, and methods of argumentation found in the secular rhetorical handbooks, to fashion an intellectual identity that seemed to be continuous with that of its forebears.[15] Other times, as in the case of Leo in the West, that meant using the ideas of his predecessors selectively, choosing only the theological and intellectual traditions that might help him fashion and articulate a nuanced interpretation of the Christian tradition that was fiercely relevant to the political disorder and psychological anxiety that late Romans were facing. Like his contemporaries, Leo believed that continuity and tradition led inexorably to the truth that was the teaching of the orthodox. He shunned innovation as the method of heretics. To break with the past was to invite not only doctrinal falsehood and error, but the same chaos that his way of imagining the world was meant to alleviate. It was to violate the well-forged connections to the past and to undermine one's place in the world in the present. Although Leo was not a rhetorician at the level of Augustine or of such eastern theologians as Basil of Caesarea (d. 379), Gregory Nazianzen (d. 389), Gregory of Nyssa (d. c. 394), and John Chrysostom (d. c. 407), he, nonetheless, skillfully maintained those connections with the past. But he also subtly transformed them to serve the purpose of bringing order to chaos and allaying anxiety in the present.[16] Intellectual and theological continuity was achieved not only by the fiction that he told of a unified church, but by making his ideas appropriate to the changing social and political circumstances with which he and his late Roman contemporaries were confronted.

By the final decades of the fifth century, the political upheaval of the imperial administration, as well as the social disorder that ensued, was complete. In the West, the Roman empire had fallen permanently into the hands of the barbarians when the last western emperor Romulus Augustus seceded to the barbarian king Odovacer in 476. Yet the event was not even deemed worthy of mention by the anonymous author(s) of the *Liber Pontificalis*, who described in the most banal terms the episcopacy of Simplicius (pope, 468–483), during whose reign Rome fell: he dedicated several basilicas, he fixed the weekly turns at several

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[15] As I have argued in S. Wessel, *Cyril of Alexandria and the Nestorian Controversy. The Making of a Saint and of a Heretic* (Oxford, 2004).

[16] What drove his method was a Latin style committed to clarity and accessibility, rather than to the virtuouso methods of argumentation and persuasion that some of his Latin and Greek-speaking contemporaries preferred: his way of using language suggests that he intended to inform and teach rather than to persuade.

churches, he condemned Peter of Alexandria for subscribing to heresy, he performed ordinations, he outfitted the Roman church with 12 silver chandeliers and a consecrated golden vessel.[17] When Rome fell, life in the Roman church went on as usual. That is because the papacy by that time had fully emerged as a powerful institution with a sense of identity strong enough to fill the structural void.

Gelasius (pope, 492–496), under the reign of the barbarian king Theodoric and of the emperors Zeno (emperor, 474–491) and Anastasius (emperor, 491–518) in the East, made the most wide-reaching claims up to that time for the role of the papacy in state affairs. In a well-known letter to Anastasius (494) he wrote,

> There are two powers, august emperor, by which this world is chiefly ruled, namely, the sacred authority of the priests and the royal power. Of these that of the priests is the more weighty, since they have to render an account for even the kings of men in the divine judgment. You are also aware, dear son, that while you are permitted honorably to rule over human kind, yet in things divine you bow your head humbly before the leaders of the clergy and await from their hands the means of your salvation. In the reception and proper disposition of the heavenly mysteries you recognize that you should be subordinate rather than superior to the religious order, and that in these matters you depend on their judgment rather than wish to force them to follow your will.[18]

The generous boundaries that Gelasius claimed for the authority wielded by the sacerdotal order did not limit him to governing the spiritual realm. From the *Liber Pontificalis* we learn that he influenced social policy, for instance, when he delivered the city of Rome from famine.[19]

Only thirty-five years separated Leo's papacy from that of Gelasius, yet by the 490's the Roman see was well on its way to infusing the public life of the city with the rhythms of the Christian liturgical calendar. After the disastrous Lombard invasions of the sixth century and the weakening of the papacy from religious controversy, the papacy of Gregory the Great (pope, 590–604) emerged as "the one [and] only glory and pride of the Roman population. As the pope became more and more the only support of the afflicted city, and finally found himself burdened with the cares of civil administration, the papal church-service became the prime expression of civic life."[20] In the following

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[17] *Liber pontificalis*, 49.
[18] Gelasius, January 494, *Famuli vestrae pietatis*, Jaffé 632. PL 59, 42.
[19] *Liber pontificalis*, 51.
[20] J.A. Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite* (*Missarum Sollemia*), trans. F.A. Brunner,

pages I shall explore to what extent Leo can be recognized as a kind of precursor to Gregory the Great, a contributing architect to the thought of the late Roman world whose idea of *romanitas* and ecclesiastical unity shaped the identity of Christians amid the advance of the barbarian kingdoms.

2. *Imperial regimes and the Roman senate*

To peer into the life of Leo the Great through his letters and sermons is to catch a glimpse of the late Roman West in a time of political transformation. Barbarian tribes were crossing the frontiers of the empire and making their new home upon Roman soil. But while this world that Leo inhabited was being gradually and decisively transformed by the barbarian migrations, its administrative institutions and social structures continued to operate.

The western emperor, like his eastern counterpart, continued to make laws and issue rescripts, to direct foreign policy, to appoint government personnel, to raise and spend taxes as he saw fit, and generally to exercise "the power of life and death over all his subjects."[21] Given the state of political uncertainty, it might be surprising to learn that the emperor of Leo's day no longer included 'military leadership' among his duties. The change in perception occurred during the course of the previous century, perhaps, when the death of the emperor Valens (emperor, 364–378) on the military field in 378, or of Theodosius I (emperor, 379–395) in 395, told of the dangers of sending an emperor to battle.[22] In the eyes of one contemporary observer writing in mid-fifth-century Gaul, Sidonius Apollinaris (d. 489), imperial officials should ideally be aristocrats responsible for allocating patronage and doling out governmental offices.[23] Military accomplishment was no longer the *sine qua non* of imperial profession that it once had been.

(New York, 1951–1955) trans. (Vienna, 1949), vol. I, p. 59; Lepelley, "Saint Léon le Grand et la cité Romain," p. 145. On the christianization of time, see Markus, *The End of Ancient Christianity*, pp. 125–135.

[21] Jones, p. 321.

[22] P.S. Barnwell, *Emperor, Prefects, and Kings: The Roman West, 395–565* (Chapel Hill, London, 1992), p. 15.

[23] Ibid. citing M. Reydellet, *La Royauté dans la littérature latine de Sidoine Apollinaire à Isidore de Séville* (Paris, 1981), pp. 61–62; Sidonius Apollinaris, *Ep.* I.4, I.6, VIII.8. See

There are no better representatives of this new type of emperor than the pair who reigned during much of Leo's papacy: the western emperor Valentinian III (emperor, 425–455) and the eastern emperor Theodosius II (emperor, 408–450). Born 2 July 419, Valentinian was the son of the patrician Constantius and of Galla Placidia ("Placidia"), the daughter of the emperor Theodosius I and the sister of the western emperor, Honorius (emperor, 395–423). Before her marriage to Constantius, she had been taken captive to Gaul to become the wife of Athaulf, the king of the Goths, shortly after his campaign across the Alps in 412. When he died nearly five years later, Placidia was stripped of her status as the Visigothic queen and returned to Rome, whereupon she agreed to marry Constantius.[24] Only seven months into his reign as co-emperor with his brother-in-law, Honorius, Placidia's second husband died (September 421), and then two years later her brother (15 August 423), leaving her vulnerable to the claims of rivals to the imperial throne. With the West bereft of its leadership and in political disarray, Theodosius served as the sole ruler of the empire for three months, until the *primicerius notariorum*, John, was proclaimed Augustus in Rome on 20 November 423.[25] Seeking the protection and support that her nephew, Theodosius, was only too willing to provide, Placidia visited his court in Constantinople where she pleaded with him for his military assistance. The eastern emperor received her warmly, because honoring this familial tie, by installing a dynastic relative,[26] afforded him the opportunity to extend his influence unabated into the West. Secure in her cousin's loyalty, Placidia, under the protection of an expeditionary force,[27] returned to Rome, where her son, the six-year-old Valentinian, was proclaimed Augustus on 23 October 425, after the usurper, John, had been deposed and executed.[28] Because of his tender age, the real imperial power was to reside in his mother, who served as his *de facto* regent and as the unopposed ruler of the West until he reached matu-

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generally R.P.C. Hanson, "The Church in Fifth-Century Gaul: Evidence from Sidonius Apollinaris," *JEH* 31 (1970), pp. 1–10.

[24] Bury, v. 1, p. 203.

[25] T. Honoré, *Law in the Crisis of Empire 379–455AD. The Theodosian Dynasty and its Quaestors* (Oxford, 1998), p. 248.

[26] A. Gillett, "The Date and Circumstances of Olympiodorus of Thebes," *Traditio* 48 (1993), p. 19.

[27] Honoré, *Law in the Crisis of Empire*, p. 248.

[28] Gillett, "The Date and Circumstances of Olympiodorus of Thebes," pp. 19–20.

rity some ten to twelve years later, though she continued to influence his reign until she died in 450.

The son of a powerful and effective Augusta who came to the throne without the military accomplishments that were the norm for emperors in the centuries before, Valentinian is remembered in the sources as something of a 'mama's boy'. Effeminate, spoiled, weak, and ineffectual, he was ready to consult astrologers and to indulge in extramarital affairs.[29] As is often the case with late Roman invective, the reality was more nuanced than this sort of name-calling might imply. At the very least, he was eager to prove his critics wrong. An opportunity to do so presented itself in the course of his relationship with Aetius, the general or *magister militum* of the West whose steady rise to power Valentinian witnessed while under his mother's regency. (The source of the general's political effectiveness resided at least partly in the close ties he had formed with the royal family of the Huns while living as a hostage among them: on more than one occasion they came to his and the empire's aid against Germanic tribes encroaching upon Gaul.)[30] Jealous of Aetius' influence and eager to assert his independence, Valentinian was persuaded by his eunuch Heraclius and by the eminent Roman senator Petronius Maximus to murder the powerful general.[31] As Gibbon famously put it, "Valentinian, drawing his sword—the first sword he had ever drawn—plunged it in the breast of a general who had saved his empire."[32] The ill-conceived plot soon turned against Valentinian. Less than six months after the murder of Aetius, Maximus decided to further his own ambitions by soliciting Aetius' supporters to exact their revenge upon the emperor. Under the direction of Maximus, Valentinian was murdered 16 March 455. With no male heirs to continue the imperial line, the West fell into a period of political instability.

For much of Valentinian's reign the eastern emperor was Theodosius II. The son of the emperor Arcadius, he was born in Constantinople in April 401. Like his western colleague, he lived much of his life under the sway of powerful women, including his sister Pulcheria, who was widely acknowledged for her competence in imperial and ecclesiastical affairs, and his wife Eudocia, the highly accomplished and educated daughter of a famous pagan philosopher. And like his western

[29] Bury, vol. 1, p. 250.
[30] Jones, p. 176.
[31] Bury, p. 208.
[32] Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, c. 35, p. 495.

colleague, his critics thought he was cowardly and effeminate, though even they acknowledged that his character was virtuous.[33] To respond to such detractors, the ecclesiastical historian Socrates (d. 439) offered what he meant to be a flattering portrait of the man: Theodosius was devoted to religion, he managed the imperial court as if it were a monastery, and he regularly commuted death sentences issued by the courts.[34] Far from rebutting the charges of cowardice, Socrates probably added fuel to the fire by confirming that the emperor was more interested in religion than he was in political and military affairs. There is some truth in Socrates' portrayal. Pulcheria who, for a number of years, served, in effect, as regent for her brother and assumed the responsibility for his education, was a profoundly pious woman, a virgin who saw herself as a living representative of the Virgin Mary and as the bride of Christ. Her visible practice of asceticism and her involvement in church politics would not have been lost on her younger brother. We know, for instance, that he was committed to overseeing the ecclesiastical affairs of the empire because not only did he convene the Council of Ephesus in 431, but he personally facilitated the post-conciliar negotiations between its opposing parties.

The student did not always abide by the judgments of the teacher. Theodosius was so confident in his grasp of theology that neither his sister, nor his cousin Valentinian, nor Leo himself could convince him to reject the theology of Dioscorus (d. 454), the controversial bishop of Alexandria who was later deposed at the Council of Chalcedon in 451. The emperor promoted his views by convening the controversial Council of Ephesus II (449) under his presidency. In more scholarly matters, the influence of the women in his life was unambiguous. To his wife Eudocia can reasonably be attributed his plan to found a set of endowed teaching posts that was conceived as a Christian alternative to the pagan centers of learning that were the schools of Alexandria and Athens, where his father-in-law held a chair and where his wife was likely educated.[35]

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[33] R.C. Blockley, *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians of the Later Roman Empire, Text, Translation and Historiographical Notes* (Liverpool, 1983), Priscus, 227–229. See also ed. C. de Boor, *Theophanis Chronographia* (Leipzig, 1883), v. 1, p. 101; trans. C. Mango, R. Scott, *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor, Byzantine and Near Eastern History AD 284–813* (Oxford, 1997) AM 5941, p. 157: "The emperor Theodosios was easily swayed, carried by every wind, so that he often signed papers unread."

[34] Socrates, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, 7.22; *GCS* N.F. 1, 368–370.

[35] Bury, v. 1, p. 232.

Neither his wife nor his sister was the inspiration for Theodosius' monumental project to collect the imperial constitutions issued by Constantine and his successors, an eight-year enterprise that was meant to continue the work of the jurists Gregorius and Hermogianus, and that culminated in a new code with more than 2,500 constitutions (313–437).[36] Issued jointly by Theodosius and Valentinian, the code deliberately limited its application to the half of the empire in which a particular constitution appeared.[37] By confining the reach of its laws to their place of origin, the code, as Gillett has concluded, assigned to judges the autonomy to decide cases on the basis of laws that had been issued locally, "thus avoiding the embarrassment of an emperor annulling the actions of his colleague."[38] The geographical restriction of the code's validity, therefore, spoke not of the separation of the two imperial courts, but of a deliberate and strategic collaboration that was rooted in their dynastic ties, and that admitted a measure of adaptability into the juridical system.

After a reign of approximately 34 years that was characterized mainly, though not exclusively, by the emperor's contributions in the spheres of religion and learning, he died suddenly in 450 as the result of an accident. Although he left no male heirs, the continuation of the Theodosian dynasty in the East (in contrast to the political instability that followed Valentinian's death in the West five years later) was secured with the cooperation of Pulcheria. She agreed to a nominal marriage to Marcian, a high-ranking soldier under the powerful Alan and *magister militum*, Aspar, who would install Marcian's successor, Leo I, seven years later.[39]

During the same period the Roman senate gradually saw an increase in its power and influence despite the fact that the institution itself now served little more than a ceremonial function.[40] The senate, on the model of the consistory, the emperor's inner circle that had slowly acquired a more formal structure since its inception during the principate, had become mainly an advisory body whose purpose was simply

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[36] J. Matthews, *Laying Down the Law. A Study of the Theodosian Code* (New Haven, London, 2000), pp. 10–11 Bury, v. 1, p. 232.

[37] Gillett, "The Date and Circumstances of Olympiodorus of Thebes," p. 21.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Bury, v. 1, p. 236.

[40] S.J.B. Barnish, "Transformation and Survival in the Western Senatorial Aristocracy, c. A.D. 400–700," *Papers of the British School at Rome* 56 (1988), p. 120; M.T.W. Arnheim, *The Senatorial Aristocracy in the Later Roman Empire* (Oxford, 1972), p. 169.

to consult with the emperor and offer him moral support.[41] Formal debates rarely took place there, and when they did their outcome was not binding. But the men who comprised the senate dominated the state's high offices, the consulship and the *illustris* offices of state. They were the great landholding aristocrats and patrons well after the empire had fragmented and the emperor disappeared.[42] As early as 433 the distinguished aristocratic dynasties controlled a large number of high posts, although a monopoly was never attained because either their ranks were not numerous enough to fill the vacant offices, or state policy prevented them from gaining such a stronghold.[43] These same families who held high state offices and were recruited for the senate managed to exert their influence through the opportunities afforded them by an institution that had lost nearly all its formal executive functions.

There were cultural and institutional ways in which this happened. The senate, which by Leo's time had been transformed into something ostensibly Christian, continued to suffuse the cultural and ceremonial life of the city with pagan survivals. Its interest in classical literature, history, and religious observances were the avenues through which the Christian senatorial elite explored their ambivalence toward a past that had at once been largely superseded, but which persisted in shaping their identity "long after the social base of paganism had vanished."[44] There was no opposition between the bishop and the senatorial aristocracy of Rome. They shared the common strategy of responding to the challenges of the barbarian migrations and, in the case of the senate, to the gradual shift to Christianity, by incorporating and reinterpreting aspects of their past that were relevant to preserving a sense of identity amid the changing conditions of fifth-century Rome. This shared commitment to grappling with the remnants of the past gave the senate more cultural vitality then it would have had were it merely locked in an isolated struggle for survival.

As far as its institutional life was concerned, the senate, until its demise in the seventh century, maintained its system of organization

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[41] Jones, p. 329.

[42] Barnish, "Transformation and Survival in the Western Senatorial Aristocracy," p. 120.

[43] Ibid., p. 124. On the importance of acclamations as a way for the senate to initiate communication with the imperial government, see Matthews, *Laying Down the Law*, pp. 31–54.

[44] C.W. Hedrick, *History and Silence. Purge and Rehabilitation of Memory in Late Antiquity* (Austin, TX, 2000), p. 58; ibid. pp. 39, 58–59.

under a president, the prefect of the city, who served as the representative to the emperor and conveyed to him the senate's interests and concerns. It was through the practice of acclamations that the senate, which had long been deprived of its legislative power, could participate, to a limited extent, in the enactment of private law.[45] When Theodosius presented the Theodosian Code, which he promulgated in 437, to the Roman senate one year later (25 December 438), they made their approval of it known, amid the customary cheers in praise of the emperor, through a series of formal acclamations. They called for the distribution of the code to the provinces, for an end to *ad hoc* legislation responding to petitions, and for authenticating copies of the code through the use of seals.[46] Although the practice, in one sense, illustrates how little power the Roman senate exercised through an institution that rarely engaged in open debate, it also indicates how willing they were to participate in the legislative process through the few avenues of influence available to them. Nearly a decade later, opportunities to act effectively seem to have increased slightly. The senate's role as an advisory body was formally acknowledged by Theodosius and Valentinian in 446 when they instituted procedures mandating that new laws be discussed in the senate before being sent to the emperor for confirmation.[47]

That the Roman senate throughout the course of the fifth century remained largely an aristocratic institution, dominated by the wealthy, landholding families of Rome, should not imply that its interests, and those of the Italian aristocracy with which it generally coincided, were at odds with the imperial court. Sometimes it was to the advantage of both these institutions and social structures to ally themselves before a common foe. That is precisely what happened when Aetius, with the help of the Gallic aristocracy whose support he had won, managed in the early 440's to pass legislation abolishing the tax privileges and exemptions enjoyed by their Italian counterparts.[48] To respond to this challenge, Valentinian combined forces with the local aristocracy to increase the power allotted to the imperial treasurer, the *comes sacrarum largitionum*, who had been recently charged with collecting the

[45] Jones, p. 331.
[46] Ibid.
[47] Bury, v. 1, p. 22. It is not clear which emperor intitiated this. See J. Harries, "The Roman Imperial Quaestor from Constantine to Theodosius II," *JRS* 78 (1993), p. 165.
[48] B.L. Twyman, "Aetius and the Aristocracy," *Historia* 19 (1970), p. 493.

siliquaticum. This was a tax on all commercial transactions that would provide an alternative means of raising revenue than the existing tax on landed wealth, the burden of which had fallen mainly upon the Italian elite.[49] This new alliance, a concerted shift in power relationships, meant that the revenues flowing into the imperial treasury would no longer come at the expense of the Italian aristocracy, who had likely cooperated with the imperial court against Aetius and his Gallic supporters. During the reign of Valentinian, therefore, the influence of the landed aristocracy was co-opted to serve the interests of the imperial court against Aetius and his Gallic supporters. Such an alliance becomes even more plausible when one considers the possibility that the imperial household was at that time residing in Rome, having relocated there from Ravenna in late 439/440 shortly after Carthage had been taken by the Vandals in October 439.[50] Not until late February 450 did the imperial household relocate permanently to Rome, a move that "was timed to coincide with the important feast of the *cathedra Petri*, commemorating at the Vatican the establishment of Saint Peter's episcopacy in Rome, and a church synod held there."[51] Far from there being a power vacuum in Rome and its environs, the height of Leo's episcopacy witnessed the physical presence of both the imperial household and a thriving aristocracy, whose great dynastic families dominated the Roman senate and gained a near monopoly of high civil offices.[52]

[49] Ibid., p. 492; T. Stickler, *Aëtius: Gestaltungsspielräume eines Heermeisters im ausgehenden Weströmischen Reich* (Munich, 2002), pp. 293–294.

[50] Gillett, "Rome, Ravenna and the Emperors," p. 146.

[51] Ibid., p. 147; Jalland, p. 54.

[52] On the power of the aristocracy as a condition of continuity between Roman and post-Roman Europe, see P. Wormwald, "The Decline of the Western Empire and the Survival of its Aristocracy," *JRS* 66 (1976), p. 217, discussing J.F. Matthews, *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court, A.D. 364–425* (Oxford, 1975); see also A. Chastagnol, "La fin du sénat de Rome," in ed. C. Lepelley, *La fin de la cité antique et le début de la cité médiéval* (Bari, 1996), pp. 345–360. On the religious identity of the holders of high administrative office under the Christian emperors, see T.D. Barnes, "Statistics and the Conversion of the Roman Aristocracy," *JRS* 85 (1995), pp. 135–147.

3. *Structure of the empire in Italy and the West*

The administration of the empire during this same period largely followed the structures, with only a few minor adjustments, put in place by Diocletian (emperor, 284–305) more than two centuries earlier. Four great regions, the Gauls, Italy, Illyricum, and the East (*Oriens*), were its major administrative units, each of which was governed by a praetorian prefect whose responsibilities were far-reaching. From the imperial rescripts recorded in the Theodosian Code we learn that the praetorian prefects consulted the emperor for advice on how to address any number of financial, legislative, judicial, and ecclesiastical questions which presumably arose during the course of their regular administrative duties.[53] As the highest ranking official of the empire, second only to the emperor himself, the praetorian prefect was truly in charge of the provincial administration. He made the most important imperial enactments known throughout the provinces; he had the authority to issue praetorian edicts; and his was the final court of appeal for cases arising within his jurisdiction.[54] The praetorian prefect was assisted in his vast administrative responsibilities by a deputy official known as a vicar (*vicarius*). Although the extent of their responsibilities remains frustratingly obscure, vicars were the officials in charge of the larger, intermediate groupings of provinces known as dioceses, which were the administrative divisions organized under the four major prefectures: the Gauls consisted of the dioceses of Britain, Gaul, Viennensis, and Spain; Italy that of Africa, the Italies, and the northwest portion of Illyria; Illyricum included the dioceses of Dacia and Macedonia; and the East that of Thrace, Asiana, Pontus, Oriens, and Egypt.[55] Only the first two prefectures, the Gauls and Italy, were within the orbit of the western emperor. The smaller divisions of the empire into provinces were ruled by governors whose responsibilities included the predictable range of administrative functions: the governor was the trial judge, as it were, for most cases arising in his province. He collected taxes, maintained the post and public works, and supervised the city governments.[56]

The administrative structure of the Italies was complicated by the fact that two vicars (*vicarii*) ruled that diocese: the vicar of the city

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[53] Barnwell, *Emperor, Prefects, and Kings*, p. 59.
[54] Bury, v. 1, p. 28.
[55] Ibid., p. 27.
[56] Jones, p. 374.

of Rome, whose district extended to the southern regions of Tuscany, Umbria, Sardinia, Corsica, and Sicily (*suburbicarian* Italy), and the vicar of Italy, who was responsible for the rest of Italy and Raetia.[57] Although the vicar of (northern) Italy was in all likelihood the deputy official of the praetorian prefect, that was not necessarily true for the vicar of Rome, who was probably a deputy of the city prefect.[58] Rome was a special case in being governed by a city prefect who fell outside the provincial structure, and whose obligations were confined to the various branches of the urban government, including the food supply, the aqueducts, the public buildings and statues, and the maintenance of law and order.[59] To assist in such duties, the vicar of Rome in the fifth century would have reported directly to the city prefect and his *cadre* of officials.

Surprisingly, the historical evidence for the way in which this complicated administrative machinery actually functioned subverts any attempt by the modern scholar to arrange it neatly into a hierarchical scheme. The temptation exists to view these arrangements as part of a rigid, interlocking system of command, issuing from the top downward, in which the emperor, praetorian prefects, vicars, and governors each maintained their proper place in a hierarchy of administrative procedure. But that would be misleading. The reality was that a provincial governor was fully justified in bypassing the vicar and praetorian prefect to consult the emperor directly. That was invariably true of the diocese of Africa, which fell outside the usual provincial jurisdiction, and whose proconsul reported to the emperor.[60] This absence of a rigid hierarchy points to a larger fact of power relationships in the late Roman world. More often than not it was the provinces that consulted the emperor on nearly every aspect of the civil administration, resulting in the sort of *ad hoc* legislation that characterizes much of the Theodosian Code. In it can be found numerous imperial rescripts addressed to provincial governors that aimed to resolve specific inquiries raised either by the governor himself or by petitioners from his province.[61] As Millar remarks of the early empire: "the centralization of *power* in the hands of an individual did not mean the centralization of initiative.

[57] Bury, v. 1, p. 27.
[58] Barnwell, *Emperor, Prefects, and Kings*, p. 63.
[59] Ibid., p. 55; Jones, p. 375.
[60] Bury, v. 1, p. 27.
[61] Jones, p. 375.

On the contrary, the Imperial power was largely static or inert, and its activity stimulated by pressures and initiatives from below."[62] The fluidity of the administrative structure accommodated this idea of power as relational and inert, because it allowed officials lower in the system a degree of autonomy even while it afforded them access to the imperial apparatus.

4. *Ecclesiastical administration*

This rather fluid secular model was the inspiration for the formal ecclesiastical structures which began to develop as early as Diocletian, and which were already well in place by the time of Leo. As influential as this model was in shaping ecclesiastical boundaries, the western church hierarchy especially was loathe to admit that its method of organization had anything to do with the secular divisions into prefectures, dioceses, and provinces.[63] Pope Innocent (pope, 401–417) expressed the common sentiment among the church hierarchy in the West when he replied to Alexander of Antioch: "with regard to your question whether, when provinces are divided by imperial decree so that there are two *metropoleis*, two bishops ought to be called metropolitans, it is not proper that the church of God should be changed in accord with the mutability of worldly needs, or should be subject to the promotions or divisions which the emperor may think fit to make for his own purposes."[64] More often than not, the ecclesiastical administration did, in fact, correspond to the boundaries of the secular provinces, the outlines of which were generally stable enough to withstand the changes wrought by political transformation and military setbacks.[65] Only rarely did its boundaries diverge from the civil prototype.[66] The administration of the Italies is worth mentioning in this regard because here is one example in which the ecclesiastical organization conformed exactly to its secular model, and in which that correspondence took place at the level of the civil diocese. Just as there were two dioceses for Italy, comprising the southern and northern territories respectively, so there were two com-

[62] F. Millar, "The Emperor, the Senate and the Provinces," *JRS* 56 (1966), p. 166.
[63] J. Gaudemet, *L'Église dans l'Empire Romain (IVe–Ve siècles)* (Paris, 1958, 1989), p. 380.
[64] Jones, p. 881; Innocent, *Ep.* 24.2, PL 20, 548–549.
[65] Gaudemet, *L'Église dans l'Empire Romain*, p. 380.
[66] Jones, p. 881.

parable ecclesiastical divisions: the bishop of Rome was responsible for the southern part, which had no metropolitans because it was never a province, while the bishop of Milan served as the metropolitan for the rest of Italy.[67] A similar structure prevailed in Egypt, Libya, and Pentapolis, where the bishop of Alexandria ruled the vast region on the pattern established in southern Italy: "Let the ancient customs preside in Egypt, Libya, and Pentapolis, so that the bishop of Alexandria may have jurisdiction in all these, since that is also the custom for the bishop of Rome."[68] There is nothing to suggest that this perfect confluence of the secular and ecclesiastical paradigm was in any way ideologically troublesome for the bishop of Rome or for those within his jurisdiction.

Although the basic ecclesiastical structure was clear enough—cities were governed by bishops, provinces by a metropolitan who served as the bishop of the metropolis of the province, and the diocese of Illyria by a vicar who was a deputy official of the bishop of Rome[69]—the physical boundaries were not as well defined as the modern reader might assume. Between localities governed by a bishop, for instance, were often large expanses of uninhabited land that made it difficult to define the geographical limits of the episcopal territory.[70] Disputes sometimes arose concerning the extent of a bishop's jurisdiction. The confusion is compounded by the fact that the terminology was itself ambiguous. Most commonly the word 'parish' but occasionally the word 'diocese', which also described a vast region in the secular administration, was used to designate the much smaller area covered by a bishopric.[71] These ambiguities aside, from as far back as the Pauline churches the fundamental unit of ecclesiastical organization was the city. As the seat of civic government and the center of secular social life, the city was the natural focal point for a burgeoning religious movement that was committed to building communities that incorporated the civic model of virtue into a Christian framework. Although the conventional wisdom by the fifth century was that each city should be governed by a bishop, a sentiment captured by canon 17 of the Council of Chalcedon (451), and then reiterated by the emperor Zeno, the reality was that bishoprics were not necessarily limited to regions that were for-

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[67] Gaudemet, *L'Église dans l'Empire Romain*, p. 384.
[68] Jones, p. 884; Council of Nicaea, c. 6, Joannou, pp. 28–29.
[69] Bury, v. 1, p. 64.
[70] Gaudemet, *L'Église dans l'Empire Romain*, pp. 325–326.
[71] Ibid., p. 323; Council of Chalcedon, c. 17, Joannou, pp. 82–83.

mally incorporated as cities.[72] They were also constituted to rule units of government, such as 'regiones' and independent villages, that did not correspond to the city proper.[73] While establishing these new episcopal territories no doubt addressed the needs of the time as Christianity spread beyond the cities into remote territories, the prevailing ideology was that multiplying bishoprics would somehow diminish the dignity of the office and, for that reason, should be avoided. As the Council of Sardica (c. 343) stated: "that it be not lawful to appoint a bishop in a village or a small town, for which even one priest alone is sufficient … in order that the episcopal title and authority be not diminished."[74] To preserve the distinction of the episcopal office while permitting the direct system of ecclesiastical government that the rural areas called for, the office of the 'chorepiscopus' was created. He was a 'village bishop' who was consecrated by the bishop of the city to govern its outlying regions, but whose responsibilities were strictly limited to administering his parish.[75] The city remained the unit of ecclesiastical governance, while the remote areas were pulled into its orbit through a developing style of administration that placed the bishop at the core of its ecclesiastical system.

In a departure from the secular model, with its tendency to subvert the rigor of its pyramidal structure, the function of each ecclesiastical office was deliberately circumscribed by its place in the hierarchy. Even the office of bishop was divided into categories, its highest rank being the archbishop or patriarch of the major sees, Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem. Next in rank was the metropolitan, who as the bishop in charge of an entire province, governed the region from its secular capital. Because people gathered in the metropolis to conduct business, this was considered the natural center of the province from which the leading bishop of the region should preside.[76] Chosen by the same rules governing the election of ordinary bishops, the metropolitan was elected by the bishops of the province, who were not themselves eligible for the office, but who made their decision by consulting the wishes of the laity and the clergy of the metropolis, from among whose presbyters or deacons the metropoli-

[72] Gaudemet, *L'Église dans l'Empire Romain*, p. 327.
[73] Jones, p. 877.
[74] Council of Sardica, c. 6, Mansi, 3.10–11.
[75] Jones, p. 879.
[76] Council of Antioch, c. 9, Mansi, 2.1311.

tan was eligible to be chosen.[77] Perhaps the sentiment was that existing bishoprics should not be disrupted to fill the office of the metropolitan when a qualified priest or deacon could readily be found. Once consecrated into office, the metropolitan's responsibilities were mainly disciplinary and supervisory: he was expected to judge the bishops within his jurisdiction, to serve as a court of appeal, to convene and preside over provincial synods, to participate in episcopal elections reserving for himself the power of veto, and to administer disciplinary measures when necessary.[78] His powers were further enhanced by circumscribing the range of functions carried out by the ordinary bishops, whose duties were strictly limited to administering the religious life of their districts, to ordaining priests and deacons, and to settling disputes within their jurisdiction. Performing any additional functions was prohibited unless the bishop first obtained the consent of the metropolitan.[79] To stifle the ambitions of bishops assigned to lesser sees, a bishop's sphere of activity was restricted to his immediate jurisdiction, which not only defined the limits of his own authority within the church hierarchy, but emphasized the relative importance of the metropolitan.[80]

The ecclesiastical functions of the bishop were, nonetheless, diverse: he was responsible for governing the churches within his jurisdiction and controlling their revenues; for administering the sacraments and reconciling penitents; for instructing the faithful in matters of doctrine and correcting those who had fallen into heresy; for supervising the monks and clergy; for ordaining priests, deacons, and the lower clergy within his jurisdiction; for participating in synods; and for generally exercising his authority over the laity.[81] As consuming as these obligations were, the bishop's activities were not confined to the ecclesiastical sphere. The Christian ideal of charitable donation and care for the disenfranchised—the widows, the orphans, the poor—was the impetus for his participation in the wider social life of the community. In a society that did not sharply distinguish the religious from the temporal domain it is not surprising to find the bishop actively engaged in humanitarian works that were also the province of the secular adminis-

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[77] Leo, *Ep.* 14.6, 446(?), *Quanta fraternitati*, Jaffe 411.

[78] Gaudemet, *L'Église dans l'Empire Romain*, p. 381.

[79] Council of Antioch, c. 9, Mansi, 2.1311.

[80] Council of Nicaea, c. 15, Joannou, pp. 36–37.

[81] Gaudemet, *L'Église dans l'Empire Romain*, pp. 341–345; Jones, pp. 874–875. On the ordination prayers for bishops, see P.F. Bradshaw, *Ordination Rites of the Ancient Churches of East and West* (New York, 1990), pp. 46–50, 55–56.

tration.[82] Because of the authority and prestige of the office, the bishop was sometimes asked to intervene in the secular courts on behalf of those who feared that the scales of justice might disappoint them. To assuage the plight of prisoners he raised money to redeem them, an activity specifically recognized and encouraged by the imperial laws.[83] In a marked reversal of duties conventionally assigned to the imperial and military organization, the bishop's most striking role was to defend the city amid the threat of barbarian invasions and to ameliorate the suffering of its inhabitants.

In addition to the bishops, the major clergy included the priests and deacons.[84] Priests (*presbyteri*) supplemented the work of bishops in carrying out the sacerdotal and pastoral functions by performing baptisms, administering the sacraments, and generally attending to the needs of the laity, but their responsibilities were circumscribed to reflect their secondary place in the church hierarchy. The African Code of 419 prohibited them from reconciling penitents or consecrating virgins, and the Council of Neo-Caesarea (315) enjoined country priests from celebrating the eucharist in an episcopal city when its bishop or priests were present.[85] Deacons differed from priests in being ordained solely for the service of the bishop. They were expected to assist the bishop not only in performing liturgical functions such as baptisms, but in managing church finances, administering charitable relief, and delivering episcopal petitions to the emperor.[86] From as early as the third century their numbers in the Roman church were limited canonically to seven in recognition of the seven ministers appointed by the apostles.[87] Because of their elite numbers, their close relationship to the bishop, and their important position in the episcopal administration and chanceries, deacons in large cities especially were sometimes accused of being arrogant and presumptuous. Conciliar canons addressed the problem by prohibiting deacons, who did not themselves have the power to celebrate the eucharist, from receiving it before the priests, whose higher

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[82] On the drain of secular discourse in late Roman society, see Markus, *The End of Ancient Christianity*, pp. 225–226.

[83] Gaudemet, *L'Église dans l'Empire Romain*, pp. 350–351.

[84] Bradshaw, *Ordination Rites of the Ancient Churches*, pp. 58–70, 71–80.

[85] Gaudemet, *L'Église dans l'Empire Romain*, p. 101; Council of Carthage (419) c. 6; C. Munier, *Concilia Africae a. 345–a. 525*, *CCSL* 149 (Turnhout, 1974), pp. 134–135; Council of Neo-Caesarea 315, c. 13, Mansi, 2.541.

[86] Council of Sardica, c. 8, Mansi, 3.11.

[87] Acts 6:3.

rank they were further to acknowledge by sitting apart from them.[88] We learn from Jerome that Roman deacons were assertive enough to recommend priests for ordination and to bless them at social gatherings, all of which confirms how important the office was in the church of Rome, and how much power its deacons likely wielded.[89] From among their ranks were chosen Siricius (pope, 384–399), Boniface (pope, 418–422), Leo the Great, Hilary (pope, 461–468), and Felix III (pope, 483–492), whose close familiarity with the politics and workings of the episcopal administration made them well-qualified and well-situated to advance to the papal office.[90]

Beneath the major clergy of bishops, priests, and deacons were minor orders, less rigidly organized, consisting mainly of sub-deacons, acolytes, exorcists, and readers, although doorkeepers, singers, and gravediggers could perhaps be added to the list. To preserve the boundaries delimiting the two-tiered system, sub-deacons, who assisted deacons much the way that acolytes assisted priests, were prohibited from touching the sacred vessels, from wearing the *orarium* or 'stole', and from taking a place in the *diaconicum*.[91] The fluidity of the minor clerical offices was perhaps best reflected among the exorcists who, having been appointed in recognition of their spiritual gifts, enjoyed different degrees of autonomy in the different churches: in Rome their intervention required the authorization of the bishop and was generally limited to exorcising catechumens.[92] The responsibilities of readers (*lectores*) were predictably confined to reading the Scriptures and chanting the Psalms.[93]

The personnel of the great episcopal churches was further enhanced by lawyers (*defensores*) and notaries (*notarii*), who were well-trained professionals serving among the full-time staff of only the wealthiest churches. Modeled on the imperial office of the *defensor civitatis*, ecclesiastical lawyers are first attested in Rome during the episcopacy of Damasus (pope, 366–384), who hired legal professionals to draft a petition to the emperor protesting the occupation of a church by one of his adver-

[88] Council of Nicaea c. 18, Joannou, pp. 39–40; Council of Laodicea, c. 20, Mansi, 2.568.

[89] Jerome, *Ep.* 146.2, PL 22, 1194; F. Prat, "Les prétentions des diacres romains au quatrième siècle," *RSR* 3 (1912), pp. 463–475.

[90] Gaudemet, *L'Église dans l'Empire Romain*, p. 103.

[91] NPNF, 2nd ser., v. 14, p. 146.

[92] Gaudemet, *L'Église dans l'Empire Romain*, p. 105.

[93] Ibid.

saries.[94] As this case suggests, legal representation was most often sought to handle ecclesiastical lawsuits demanding the intervention of the civil authorities, but whose subject matter generally fell outside the purview of the civil jurisdiction.[95] The lawyer's task was to negotiate the boundaries between the ecclesiastical and secular spheres, and to convince the imperial bureaucracy that its intervention was required. Although lawyers were always recruited from among the ranks of the laity, their ambition was to integrate themselves more fully into the church hierarchy by embarking upon an ecclesiastical career.[96]

Notaries, in contrast, were represented among the full complement of ecclesiastical offices, their status as priests, deacons, and readers being well attested in the sources.[97] Not all notaries were members of the clergy. Gregory Nazianzen hired a notary who was a slave presumably skilled in the technique of shorthand notation known as stenography.[98] But not all notaries were trained as stenographers. Those among the clergy were especially likely to assume broader responsibilities that may or may not have included shorthand notation, but that surely reflected the personal trust they had earned and the esteem with which they were held in their respective churches: they assisted deacons in church administration and they managed the archives.[99] That notaries occupied various grades in the ecclesiastical hierarchy indicates that their status was not uniform, even within a single church. Papal notaries, whose prestige was obviously greater than those serving in lesser churches, were themselves differentiated according to rank. Just as the imperial bureaucracy recognized a *schola notariorum* consisting of several grades, so did the papal see distinguish the *primicerius notariorum*, an official above the rest whose responsibilities rivaled those of the arch-presbyter and archdeacon of Rome.[100] Charged with undertaking

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[94] C. Sotinel, "Le personnel épiscopal: enquête sur la puissance de l'évêque dans la cité," in eds. E. Rebillard, C. Sotinel, *L'Évêque dans la cité du Ive au Ve siècle: image et autorité*: *actes de la table ronde organisée par l'Istituto patristico Augustinianum et l'École française de Rome* (Rome, 1998), p. 110.

[95] Ibid.

[96] Ibid. p. 112.

[97] H.C. Teitler, *Notarii and Exceptores. An Inquiry into Role and Significance of Shorthand Writers in the Imperial and Ecclesiastical Bureaucracy of the Roman Empire* (Amsterdam, 1985), p. 90.

[98] Ibid., p. 91.

[99] Ibid., p. 87; Sotinel, "Le personnel épiscopal: enquête sur la puissance de l'évêque dans la cité," p. 107.

[100] Teitler, *Notarii and Exceptores*, p. 88.

the most important diplomatic missions, the *primicerius* was also responsible for overseeing the writing and dispatching of the pope's correspondence.[101] Even the ordinary papal notaries were in a class by themselves relative to the other churches. They wrote papal letters, they delivered important messages to the patriarchal sees, and they served as papal delegates, representing the interests of Rome at such councils as the Council of Ephesus in 431 and the Council of Ephesus II in 449.

As the church officials most skilled in the sundry aspects of document management and production, the *primicerius* and his *cadre* of notaries (*secundarii*) were put in charge of the ecclesiastical archives. Technically known as the *scrinium*, the archives are attested for the papal office by the middle of the fourth century and their continuing efficiency is easily confirmed by the time of Leo, who acknowledged having found "in our archives ('in nostro scrinio')" a letter he received from Cyril of Alexandria (d. 444) (no longer extant), presumably while he, Leo, was still a deacon.[102] What those archives contained can be surmised by considering how the documentary branch of the papal office generally functioned: letters were dispatched on the initiative of the pope, and letters in response were received; letters of inquiry were received, and a papal response was dispatched. The document recording and preserving this exchange of letters is known as a register, a practice that was followed by the secular bureaucracy of the Roman empire and that presumably prevailed in the papal office as well, although no copy of such a register has survived from the early period. Its existence by the time of Leo can be presumed, nonetheless, by examining two document collections. The first was a group of decretals dating from approximately 443 that was certainly derived from such a record, and the second, the *Avellana collectio*, a compilation of documents from four different registers beginning as early as the papacy of Liberius (pope, 352–366).[103] Given that its prototype was the secular register, a further presumption can be made that the entire document was preserved, including the protocols and other formal epistolary parts that the manuscripts transmitting the papal letters often either abbreviated or simply omitted in

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[101] R.L. Poole, *Lectures on the History of the Papal Chancery* (Cambridge, 1915), p. 15.

[102] Gaudemet, *L'Église dans l'Empire Romain*, p. 226; Leo, *Ep.* 119.4, 11 June 453, *Quantum dilectione tuae*, Jaffé 495.

[103] Poole, *Lectures on the History of the Papal Chancery*, p. 30; *Avellana collectio*, *Epistulae Imperatorum Pontificum aliorum inde ab a. CCCLXVII ad a. DCIII datae*, *CSEL* 35 (Prague, Vienna, Leipzig, 1895).

the interest of highlighting their legal and doctrinal content.[104] From as early as the Council of Carthage in 411 notaries (*notarii* and *exceptores*) recorded the proceedings of church councils, making it reasonable to infer that copies of such transcripts were kept among the archives. Copies of important doctrinal letters and documents not directly originating from or addressed to a pope were also preserved in the archives by the time of Leo, as we learn from his explicit reference to the copy of Athanasius' famous letter to Epictetus that he had in his possession, and which can be deduced from the numerous quotations from and allusions to the works of prior theologians in a *florilegium* he composed to educate the emperor Leo I (emperor, 457–474).[105]

Whether such documents were contained in the papal library adjacent to the archives or in the archives proper makes little difference for acknowledging the fact of their existence. That Leo had such a repository of texts at his disposal was essential to the developing office of the papacy. The papal chancery, as it came to be known once the title of chancellor was borrowed from the imperial bureaucracy in the eleventh century,[106] was fully functioning by the time of Leo.

5. *Advance of the barbarian kingdoms*

The most sweeping geopolitical change affecting the late Roman West just prior to and during the time of Leo was the hostile invasion, the gradual migration, and the permanent settlement of barbarians onto Roman territory.[107] A major wave of this transformation was marked by the crossing of the Rhine into Gaul by the Vandals, which included Asdings and Silings, Suevi, and Alans, on 31 December 405, and their subsequent movement westward.[108] What began as the lone migration of the Vandals, whose native lands no longer supported their flourish-

[104] Ibid., p. 31.

[105] Leo, *Ep.* 109.3, 25 November 452, *Gravia sunt et*, Jaffé 486; *Ep.* 165, 17 August 458, *Promisisse me*, Jaffé 542.

[106] Poole, *Lectures on the History of the Papal Chancery*, p. 2.

[107] On the cluster of events leading up to and including the Rhine crossings, see P.J. Heather, *The Fall of the Roman Empire* (London, 2005), p. pp. 193–199.

[108] M. Kulikowski, "Barbarians in Gaul, Usurpers in Britain," *Britannia* 31 (2000), p. 331; see W. Pohl, "The Vandals: Fragments of a Narrative," in ed. A.H. Merrills, *Vandals, Romans and Berbers. New Perspectives on Late Antique North Africa* (Aldershot, 2004), p. 36; on Alaric and Gaul see P.J. Heather, *Goths and Romans, 332–489* (Oxford, 1991), pp. 193–224.

ing numbers and whose neighbors were the powerful Huns and Ostrogoths that threatened them, soon attracted the Suevi from the ancient Quadi and the Alans from Pannonia into their midst. Together they united their martial forces to enter into Gaul.[109] With the Rhine frontier defended poorly by Roman troops, a great number of whom had been called by the general Stilicho to defend Italy against the Visigoths and Ostrogoths, the combined barbarian forces, swiftly and virtually unopposed, devastated the major cities comprising three of the provinces in northern Gaul: Belgica Prima, Belgica Secunda, and Germania Prima.[110] Jerome described "a universal scene of desolation" in which cities were destroyed and untold numbers of people massacred.[111]

That the invasions in the North were hostile should not imply that this same pattern governed the entry of barbarians into southwestern Gaul. There it was a matter of imperial policy to settle barbarians on Roman soil. The Goths who defeated the Alans, Suevi, and Vandals in Spain were compensated for their service to the empire in 418 by receiving settlements of deserted lands and imperial properties along the western seaboard of Gaul and in the neighboring city of Toulouse, which became the capitol of the Visigothic kings.[112] The Burgundians, a menacing presence in northern Gaul who had recently threatened the region of Belgica Prima, were settled by Aetius in Savoy south of Lake Geneva by the mid-430's, sometime after their kingdom centered in Worms was destroyed by Huns who were taking orders from Aetius.[113] Two groups of Alans were also settled by Aetius in southern Gaul, the first on land around Orleans, and the second in the neighborhood of Valence in 440.[114]

The relationship between the barbarian settlers and the Gallo-aristocratic population was similar to that of a guest to a *hospes*, an arrangement known as *hospitalitas* (i.e. billeting) that dated to the time of the

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[109] Bury, v. 1, p. 186. See also Heather, *The Fall of the Roman Empire*, pp. 193–199.

[110] Kulikowski, "Barbarians in Gaul, Usurpers in Britain," p. 331.

[111] Jerome, *Ep.* 123.16, PL 22, 1057.

[112] E.A. Thompson, "The Settlement of the Barbarians in Southern Gaul," *JRS* 46 (1956), p. 65; H. Sivan, "On Foederati, Hospitalitas, and the Settlement of the Goths in A.D. 418," *The American Journal of Philology* 108 (1987), p. 770. Whether those lands included or were limited to tax revenues is uncertain. See T.S. Burns, "The settlement of 418," in J. Drinkwater, H. Elton, *Fifth-century Gaul: a crisis of identity?* (Cambridge, New York, 1992), pp. 49–63, esp. pp. 57–58.

[113] Heather, *The Fall of the Roman Empire*, p. 382. Bury, v. 1, p. 249.

[114] Ibid. p. 292; Thompson, "The Settlement of the Barbarians in Southern Gaul," p. 66.

Republic. In its current guise, the Gallic elite with the largest estates, the Gallo-Roman senators, were asked to relinquish a significant percentage of their land's produce, and by the middle of the century to divide their estates, in exchange for which the settlers, sometimes known as 'foederati', were expected to defend militarily the interests of the empire.[115] What prompted these great landowners of Gaul to support Aetius' policy and obligingly share their wealth with foreign settlers cannot be explained simply by imagining that this striking concession was a response to such remote barbarians as the Alamanni who resided far beyond the Danube.[116] Because these new settlers were ensconced within the territory of Gaul and not along its vulnerable frontiers, a more immediate threat might be presumed. Thompson has suggested that internal Gallic conflict stirring among the slaves and allies in Gaul, which had caused serious problems earlier in the century, was the military concern to which the settlement of barbarians likely responded.[117] Sivan has argued, however, that the barbarians who had fought for the empire in Spain were, upon their settlement in Gaul, given the tax advantages and land grants that the Roman law bestowed upon veterans, thereby creating a legal fiction meant to facilitate their acceptance among Gallo-Roman society.[118] Even more significant was the fact that Aetius had somehow created for Roman Gaul a new class of landholding foreigners, a nobility whose interests were made to coincide loosely with Rome's and to diverge from the general concerns of their warrior counterparts.[119] Though most likely tolerated rather than welcomed, this barbarian presence on Roman territory signals how well the Gallic elite understood the paradox of their circumstance, that Gallo-Roman identity could be sustained by rationing its most visible expression, which was the landed wealth of the senatorial aristocracy,

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[115] Only the relationship between the barbarians and the Gallo-Roman elite is being considered here. The term 'foederati' does not account for all types of accommodation made to the barbarians, which included tax exemption and special legal status. Sivan, "On Foederati, Hospitalitas, and the Settlement of the Goths in A.D. 418," p. 766. On the uncertainty regarding the precise mechanism of this system, see Burns, "The Settlement of 418," p. 58.

[116] Thompson, "The Settlement of the Barbarians in Southern Gaul," p. 74.

[117] Ibid. P. Rousseau calls this suggestion into question in "Visigothic Migration and Settlement, 376–468: Some Excluded Hypotheses," *Historia* 41 (1992), pp. 344–361.

[118] Sivan, "On Foederati, Hospitalitas, and the Settlement of the Goths in A.D. 418," pp. 770–772.

[119] Thompson, "The Settlement of the Barbarians in Southern Gaul," p. 75.

among the same barbarians—the Visigoths, Burgundians, and Alans—that had elsewhere imperiled them.

Warriors from the same group of Alans, Sueves, and Vandals that had crossed the Rhine to enter Gaul in late 405 reorganized nearly four years later to make their indelible mark upon the social and political fabric of Spain.[120] The devastation that they left in their wake was described in florid tones by the fifth-century Spanish bishop Hydatius, whose chronicle, which ended the year he died in 468, saw this recent turn of events as part of a long line of calamities presaging the world's apocalyptic demise in 482.[121] "As the barbarians ran wild through Spain with the evil of pestilence raging as well, the tyrannical tax collector seized the wealth and goods stored in the cities and the soldiers devoured them. A famine ran riot, so dire that driven by hunger humans devoured human flesh… And thus with the four plagues of sword, famine, pestilence, and wild beasts raging everywhere throughout the world, the annunciation foretold by the Lord through his prophets was fulfilled."[122] As dramatic as this upheaval was, the barbarian raids do not seem to have disrupted the Roman administration, whose tax collectors and soldiers, as Hydatius' remarks make clear, continued to function in a way that compounded, rather than eased, the widespread agony.[123] Such untempered pillaging and destruction of the Spanish provinces persisted for nearly one more year until gradually the barbarian invaders settled down to divide up their spoils. The Asding Vandals and Suevi took Galaecia in the northwest, the Alans took the province of Lusitania and part of Carthaginiensis, and the Siling Vandals took Baetica in the South, a process that was by no means entirely peaceful.[124] In contrast to the situation already remarked upon in Gaul, no Spanish cities surrendered during this time, the majority of the devastation having fallen upon the countryside, where crops were burned and people left to die from starvation and disease.[125] This uneasy state

[120] On the Alans and Vandals, see B.S. Bachrach, *A History of the Alans in the West. From Their First Appearance in the Sources of Classical Antiquity through the Early Middle Ages* (Minneapolis, 1973), pp. 51–59.

[121] M. Kulikowski, *Late Roman Spain and Its Cities* (Baltimore, London, 2004), p. 155; R.W. Burgess, "Hydatius and the Final Frontier: The Fall of the Roman Empire and the End of the World," in ed. R.W. Mathisen, *Law, Society, and Authority in Late Antiquity* (Oxford, 1999), pp. 321–332.

[122] Kulikowski, *Late Roman Spain and Its Cities*, p. 161.

[123] Ibid., p. 164.

[124] Ibid., p. 162.

[125] Ibid., p. 164.

of affairs prevailed until 415, when Wallia succeeded Athaulf as the king of the Visigoths, and for a sum of 600,000 *modii* of corn paid by the emperor Honorius (emperor, 393–423) agreed to subjugate the barbarians in Spain.[126] For the next two years Wallia, under the direction of Honorius' general Constantius, waged a successful campaign against the Silings in Baetica and the Alans in Lusitania, slaughtering all but a few Alans, who eventually integrated themselves among the Asdings and Suevi that had been recognized as federates in the province of Galaecia.

There were sound political and military reasons for treating Galaecia differently from the rest of Spain. To restore Spain as a diocesan vicariate functioning within the imperial system, the most important strategic move would have been to recover Mérida, the diocesan capital of Lusitania, as well as Baetica, the route leading to it.[127] Galaecia, in contrast, was a remote region of Spain that was better left to the Asdings and Suevi than to risk overextending Wallia's forces. Dividing barbarian loyalties by massacring some tribes while welcoming others as Roman federates, Constantius deployed Wallia's troops judiciously for only those military campaigns that were necessary to reinstate the Roman administrative system.[128] To recognize this success in defeating the Silings and Alans, Wallia and his forces were called to settle permanently as federates in Gaul (418).

Soon after the Visigoths' departure from Spain a war broke out between the Vandals and Suevi that captured the attention of Asterius, the newly created *comes Hispaniarum*, whose military intervention on behalf of the Suevi unfortunately incited the Vandals to migrate southward from Galaecia (where they had been assigned as federates) to Baetica, attacking Romans along the way. The Vandals fought so relentlessly that peace was not restored to southern Spain until they finally left the region for Africa in 429. Widespread pillaging and plundering returned to the Spanish provinces less than a decade later as a result of the restless Suevi, whose intermittent raids now extended beyond their settlement in the northern region of Galaecia southward into Baetica and eastward into Carthaginiensis.[129] To quiet the growing unrest and reconquer Spain, Avitus (the *magister militum* who briefly

[126] Jones, p. 188.
[127] Kulikowski, *Late Roman Spain and Its Cities*, p. 171.
[128] Ibid.
[129] Jones, p. 190.

assumed the imperial throne (455–456)) solicited the help of Wallia's successor Theodoric II, the Visigothic king. Although the Suevi continued to break treaties and wreak havoc upon the provinces throughout the next several years, the Visigothic alliance that was forged by Honorius and then resumed by Avitus and his successor (and assassin) Majorian ensured that the diocese of Spain functioned more or less as part of the Roman system until the year 460, after which imperial officials are no longer attested.[130] Roman traditions persisted, nonetheless, in the political and cultural imagination for decades to come, even while the governmental administration of Spain gradually fragmented among the competing interests of Spanish-Roman aristocrats, Suevic chieftains, and Gothic kings.[131]

Well before the political demise of Roman Spain, the Vandals together with the Alans departed from their settlement in Baetica and crossed the straits of Gibraltar to enter North Africa (429) through the westernmost provinces of the Mauritanias, Caesariensis and Sitifensis. There, under the command of the Vandal king Geiseric (428–477), they plundered ruthlessly as Roman troops subdued a rebellious military commander far to the east in the cities of Hippo and Carthage.[132] Sources describing the conquest paint a bleak picture in which laity and clergy, young and old, men and women alike were tortured and sacred treasures plundered.[133] By 435 the Vandals had assumed enough of a menacing posture in the region that Valentian III decided formally to acknowledge the *status quo* by relinquishing parts of Mauritania and Numidia rather than lose North Africa entirely.[134] In exchange for this concession the Vandals agreed to pay an annual tribute to Rome (which they honored until 455), ostensibly recognizing it as the dominant power in the region.[135] As so-called "federates" of the empire, they "were stationed as Roman soldiers in Roman provinces" and "they were paid and supplied by the cities of North Africa."[136] No sooner had their hostile presence on Roman territory been accepted reluctantly

[130] Kulikowski, *Late Roman Spain and Its Cities*, pp. 186–192.

[131] Ibid., p. 197; on the beginnings of the idea of a Spanish-Gothic nation in the chronicle of Hydatius, see S. Teillet, *Des Goths à la nation Gothique. Les origines de l'idée de nation en Occident du Ve au VIIe siècle* (Paris, 1984), pp. 207–250, esp. pp. 239–241.

[132] Jones, p. 190.

[133] Bury, v. 1, p. 247.

[134] Pohl, "The Vandals: Fragments of a Narrative," p. 40. Heather, *The Fall of the Roman Empire*, p. 286.

[135] Bury, v. 1, p. 249.

[136] A. Schwarcz, "The Settlement of the Vandals in North Africa," in ed. A.H. Mer-

by the imperial court, and provisionally contained through a treaty, than the Vandals continued their conquest westward into Carthage, the largest metropolis in the west after Rome, and an important source of grain for the empire.[137] There is no doubt that the taking of Carthage (439), the capital of Proconsularis and the center of the diocesan imperial administration, was a decisive strategic victory for the Vandals and a military disaster for the Romans. It signaled a considerable shift in the relationship between the two colonial powers competing for ascendancy on North African soil. Officially "the friends and allies of the empire," the Vandals after the fall of Carthage no longer perceived themselves as a federation in service of the empire, but as the masters of an independent state who had subscribed to a pact of non-aggression.[138]

Their settlement in the region was far from peaceful. The operations of the Vandal royal court and functionaries, its military apparatus, and its Arian ecclesiastical administration were financed by confiscating the wealth of the Roman aristocracy, the goods of the Catholic church, and the lands of the province they had conquered. This pattern continued to shape their political self-government and their system of finance well beyond the death of Valentian III.[139] From this point onward (19 October 439) Geiseric began to number his regnal years as he settled his troops throughout the African countryside on lands confiscated from the senatorial aristocracy, demonstrating by his actions that he and his Vandal forces were no longer defined by the Roman imperial law and calendar.[140] When the Roman fisc was plundered to finance the Vandal royal court, and land and treasures belonging to the Nicene churches were appropriated to service the incoming Arian clergy and bishops who represented the same variety of Christianity to which the Vandals subscribed,[141] there was little more the imperial authority could do than to acknowledge the political and cultural transformation. A

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rills, *Vandals, Romans and Berbers. New Perspectives on Late Antique North Africa* (Aldershot, 2004), p. 53.

[137] Pohl, "The Vandals: Fragments of a Narrative," p. 39.

[138] Y. Modéran, "L'Établissement territorial des Vandales en Afrique," in *Antiquité Tardive* 10 (2002), p. 94.

[139] Modéran, ibid. p. 102, citing Victor of Vita, *Historia persecutionis africanae provinciae*, I, 12–14, ed. C. Halm, *MGH AA*, III, 1, pp. 4–5; Schwarcz, "The Settlement of the Vandals in North Africa," p. 57.

[140] Ibid., pp. 50, 54; nor were the Vandals a homogeneous group. F.M. Clover, "The Symbiosis of Romans and Vandals in Africa," in idem. *The Late Roman West and the Vandals* (Aldershot, 1993), X, p. 58.

[141] Schwarcz, "The Settlement of the Vandals in North Africa," p. 55.

treaty was signed (442) that relinquished the eastern Roman provinces of Proconsularis, Byzacena, and Tripolitania to Geiseric in exchange for the restoration of the Mauritanias and Numidia.

From this new vantage point in the strategic center of Carthage, Vandal rule quickly extended through their dominance of the western Mediterranean and beyond into the islands of the Mediterranean sea and the cities along the coasts of southern Italy and Greece. This naval supremacy eventually facilitated their sack of Rome for a solid two weeks in 455.[142] If nothing else, that event signaled how greatly the self-understanding of the Vandals differed from that of the Visigoths armed against Roman enemies in Spain and from that of the barbarians settled in southwestern Gaul. There, the political concerns of a new landholding elite coexisted, if somewhat uneasily, alongside the continuing interests of the Gallo-Roman aristocracy.[143] As their plundering of the empire's leading city in the West made clear, the Vandals intended to distinguish themselves from everything Roman by defeating, rather than integrating, its cultural and political heritage into their own. Their religion was Arian; they persecuted the Nicenes; they took Romans as hostages; and they forced the North African senatorial aristocracy into a weary exile. There was no alliance, reluctant or otherwise, between the Roman aristocracy and the Vandal nobility as there was between the Visigoths and the Spanish-Roman elite or the Gallo-Roman senators and their barbarian neighbors—the Visigoths, Burgundians, and Alans whom Aetius nestled into the great aristocratic estates of southwestern Gaul.

6. *Survey of the life of Leo the Great*

Almost nothing is known of Leo's life prior to the start of his ecclesiastical career. According to the *Liber Pontificalis*, he was born towards the end of the fourth century to a Tuscan man named Quintianus. Another tradition that is even less secure places his origin and upbringing in the city of Volaterrae. That both his secretary, Prosper of Aquitaine, whom he summoned to Rome in c. 440, and Leo himself claimed Rome for

[142] Pohl, "The Vandals: Fragments of a Narrative," p. 40.

[143] Vandals and Romans rarely cooperated with one another despite the persistence of Roman and Christian life in the region. Clover, "The Symbiosis of Romans and Vandals in Africa," in idem. *The Late Roman West and the Vandals*, X, p. 60.

his homeland or *patria* sheds no new light upon the matter, but merely acknowledges his affection for the province of his public career. Nothing more can be said about Leo's early years.

What little can be known of his formal education must be gleaned from his letters and sermons. Written in a meticulously clear and precise Latin style that suggests more than a passing familiarity with the elementary rules of secular rhetoric and with the style of prose rhythm used by the imperial chancery, his literary *corpus* betrays, nevertheless, not the slightest hint of a more advanced classical education, with the allusions to pagan literature and learning that such a background might generate. His education was, in other words, thorough enough for him to have mastered the basic rules of rhetorical composition that one might learn in the school exercises of the day, but it was exclusively and self-consciously Christian. Steeped in the writings of the Latin church fathers (for Leo knew barely a word of Greek), his *corpus* is devoid of the references to pagan literature that was to find its way into the works of such classically educated and rhetorically sophisticated thinkers as Augustine in North Africa and the Cappadocian theologians from the eponymous region in Asia Minor.[144] The passing allusions to pagan learning that Leo surely encountered in the elementary rhetorical exercises of his youth were simply not exhaustive or compelling enough to be etched into his literary imagination or to leave any conspicuous trace upon his writings.

Leo enters into the annals of ecclesiastical history as an acolyte for the Roman church who came to the attention of Augustine.[145] During the papacy of Zosimus in 418 (pope, 417–418) Leo traveled to North Africa to deliver a letter to Aurelius of Carthage (d. c. 430), which was composed by the presbyter Sixtus, the same Sixtus (pope, 432–440) who was later to assume the office of the papacy in 432. In it, Sixtus condemned the teachings of Pelagius (monk, d. c. 420/440) against divine grace eloquently enough for Augustine to transcribe the letter and read it aloud with approval to anyone willing to listen. That Leo delivered such a letter suggests how trusted he was among the church hierarchy and how deeply ensconced in its theology and politics while still a man in his twenties. It was here, in service to the

[144] The Cappadocian theologians were Gregory of Nyssa, Basil of Caesarea, and Gregory Nazianzen.

[145] Augustine, *Ep.* 191.1, PL 33, 867.

clergy and bishop of Rome, that Leo acquired the training in church administration and politics that was the mainstay of his ecclesiastical education.

During the papacy of Caelestine (pope, 422–432) Leo was promoted to the office of archdeacon of Rome, the highest among the seven deacons who served there. In that capacity he likely administered the church finances, organized charitable relief for the poor, dispatched messages between the imperial court and the apostolic see, and generally assisted the pope in performing the sacerdotal functions. His distinction in theological matters was significant enough that the defining ecclesiastical controversy of this time—the christological dispute between Cyril of Alexandria (d. 444) and Nestorius of Constantinople (d. c. 451)—also fell within his purview. He commissioned John Cassian, the famous spiritual and monastic leader, to write a treatise on the Incarnation condemning the christological doctrine of Nestorius. It was John Cassian, in fact, who, having become acquainted with Leo during a long stay in Rome, first publicly acclaimed his preeminence within the ecclesiastical hierarchy by recognizing him as "the ornament of the Roman church and of the divine ministry." That Leo wielded a kind of power and prestige at Rome that was perhaps unusual even for an archdeacon was further conceded, if rather obliquely, by Cyril of Alexandria. He wrote a letter in 431 informing Leo that Juvenal of Jerusalem (d. 458) had attempted improperly to elevate the Jerusalem see to a full-fledged patriarchate, and that Leo's personal intervention through the channels of the apostolic see would be needed to settle the matter.[146] Approximately eight years later (439) Leo had become such a trusted adviser to pope Sixtus III (for whom he, while serving as an acolyte, had delivered the letter to North Africa in 418) that he, Leo, convinced him to reject the pleas of the pelagian Julian of Eclanum (d. c. 455) to be reinstated to the orthodox church without having formally recanted his heretical views.

Given the level of distinction that Leo had achieved within the Roman hierarchy, it should come as no surprise that he was chosen one year later (440) to undertake a secular diplomatic mission to Gaul to resolve a dispute that had arisen between the *magister militum* Aetius and the praetorian prefect Albinus (443–448). As a member of a powerful faction among the Italian aristocracy, a representative of the house

[146] Leo, *Ep.* 119.4, 11 June 453, Jaffé 495.

of the great Caeionii, Albinus quarreled with Aetius regarding his (i.e., Aetius') "settlement of affairs in Gaul after the restoration of peace" in the late 430's.[147] Leo resolved the matter and, in the words of Prosper of Aquitaine, "restored friendship" between the disputing parties. The diplomatic mission is all the more striking because Leo was not the only official in the city capable of undertaking such an embassy. Valentinian's family had returned from Ravenna to Rome in late 439/early 440, just after the Vandals had captured Carthage in October 439. Leo's presence on the mission, therefore, speaks not to the existence of a power vacuum there, but rather to a productive and formidable alliance between the secular power and the ecclesiastical administration. His connections among the great aristocratic families of Rome and his influence among the church hierarchy made him especially well qualified to arbitrate the potentially troublesome dispute that had arisen while Albinus was stationed in Gaul.[148]

Although the precise circumstances of the controversy are unknown, its broader setting consisted in the tension between the Gallic and Italian aristocracies resulting from Aetius' policy to promote a form of equitable taxation among the landholding Italians. The policy would have eventually resulted in their bearing a greater percentage of the tax burden. The interests of Aetius as a powerful Roman general who was connected with the Gallic landed aristocracy were generally at odds with those of the Italian dynastic families of which Albinus was a representative. Leo was chosen to resolve their differences not because he was the only powerful man left in Rome, but because he, an able representative of the ecclesiastical elite, was acquainted with the power politics of the Italian aristocracy that was the context for this dispute and whose interests he was equipped to defend. To conclude anything more about the diplomatic mission would be to engage in undue speculation. What is known for certain is that pope Sixtus III died while Leo was serving in Gaul, as a result of which the Roman church "for more than forty days … was without a bishop, awaiting with wonderful peace and patience the arrival of the deacon Leo."[149] Upon his return Leo was

147 Twyman, "Aetius and the Aristocracy," pp. 490–491.

148 On the involvement of the Christian aristocracy in Rome with the ecclesiastical life of the city, see J. Matthews, "Anicius Manlius Severinus Boethius," in ed. M. Gibson, *Boethius, His Life, Thought and Influence* (Oxford, 1989), pp. 23–25.

149 Prosper, *Epit. Chron.*, a. 440, 1341. See A. Gillett, *Envoys and Political Communication in the Late Antique West, 411–533* (Cambridge, 2003), pp. 114–115; S. Muhlberger, *The Fifth-Century Chroniclers: Prosper, Hydatius, and the Gallic Chronicler of 452* (Leeds, 1990), p. 111.

immediately consecrated both priest and bishop on 29 September 440, becoming the 47th pope of Rome.

The first action he took as the newly-elected pope was to impose the same disciplinary measures that he had recommended while serving as a deacon under Sixtus III. He regulated the readmittance into orthodoxy of those who subscribed to the heresy of Pelagianism (442) in the province of Aquileia, where it had found some favor among the priests, deacons, and lower clergy. As the heresy that Augustine had devoted so much time and so many pages to refuting for its rejection of the workings of divine grace and for its insistence upon a monastic system of reward and punishment, Pelagianism was perhaps well chosen as the first doctrinal battle of Leo's papacy. It defined him as someone committed to championing, through whatever practical disciplinary measures that were needed, the same Augustinian view of grace to which such predecessors as Caelestine had subscribed, and for which he too had taken a definitive stand.

The doctrinal disciplinarian that was Leo's *persona* as the new bishop of Rome came into sharpest focus when he confronted the Manichaeans (444). Here he orchestrated what could be considered the first inquisition at Rome. After the Vandal king Geiseric captured Carthage in 439, adherents of the sect, which espoused a dualism of God and matter that rendered the Incarnation of no particular consequence at all, left the region and migrated to Italy, where they came to Leo's attention. A trial was held over which Leo presided and at which clergy, bishops, and representatives of the Roman Christian elite were present. Before this allied body of ecclesiastical and secular officials, the leaders of the Manichaean sect in Rome were examined, and certain details of their ceremonial rites came to light that the judges found shocking enough to result in the burning of their books and in the permanent banishment of those who refused to recant their views. To lend this ecclesiastical sentence the force of an imperial law, Valentinian issued decrees removing the rights of citizenship from anyone who continued to subscribe to the sect. Its effectiveness was further extended throughout the region when Leo urged the bishops from the provinces in Italy to search for those who may have fled Rome to settle furtively in the countryside. His governing style was characterized by this multifaceted approach to resolving challenges to his ecclesiastical vision, by which he solicited the cooperation of the Christian aristocracy and the imperial court, as well as the provincial bishops.

The content of that vision was further explored one year later (445) when Leo considered the relationship between the see of Rome and the prefecture of the Gauls by limiting the authority of its metropolitan bishop. His stated purpose was not to extend Roman leadership into Gaul, but rather to preserve the autonomy of provincial bishoprics against the designs of an ambitious man named Hilary, the bishop of Arles (d. 449). He was a classically educated aristocrat who was as well connected to the Gallic elite as he was to the monastic world of asceticism and spirituality that was centered on the island of Lerins off the coast of southern Gaul. He came to Leo's attention for deposing a certain Celidonius, the bishop of Besançon in northern Gaul, for having married a widow in violation of the canons, and for having imposed the death sentence while serving as a secular official. To appeal this sentence, Celidonius traveled to Rome where, in the presence of Hilary, Leo decided that he, Celidonius, was innocent of the charges against him and should be restored to his see. Hilary was divested of the authority he had assumed over the province of Vienne, his sphere of activity being confined to his bishopric. That Leo divided the metropolitan authority only five years later (450) between the new bishop of Arles and the bishop of Vienne illustrates that he was committed to the idea that ecclesiastical power could be exercised judiciously from a provincial bishopric and need not emanate unilaterally from the apostolic see.

The rules and disciplinary measures that Leo established for southern Italy and for the province of Mauritania Caesariensis in North Africa during these years (443–446) can also be considered in this context. Widowers and twice-married men were not to serve as priests; usury was forbidden for both clergy and laity; the multiplication of bishoprics was to be avoided; ecclesiastical promotions were not to be hasty; and rules were to govern the appointment of bishops. These decretals seem to indicate the tendency of the apostolic see to interfere audaciously in the provincial churches, until one considers that Leo was writing to local bishoprics in his capacity as their metropolitan. He wanted to provide North African bishops with the administrative order and regularity they required amid the chaos that was the result of the Vandal invasions years before. His decretals were to provide a unified set of legal guidelines within which the bishops were to resolve their local cases. Although this model of ecclesiastical authority was certainly hierarchical, it drew some of its inspiration from the more fluid concept of power and leadership, mentioned earlier, which operated within the

secular administration. Its provincial officials were given a measure of autonomy that not only permitted, but required, them to solve independently all but the most thorny problems.

Leo's relationship to the eastern churches was complicated by the fact that its patriarchal sees understood differently from the western churches the circumstances under which Rome might intervene profitably in ecclesiastical cases. In the West, the capacity of the apostolic see to decide any number of issues was widely, if sometimes ambivalently, acknowledged by the provincial churches. In the East, the more democratic model of ecclesiastical decision-making that prevailed recognized the authority of the bishop of Rome within the larger context of an ecumenical council that was called by the emperor, that a considerable number of bishops and clergy attended, and whose power resided with the majority. These competing visions colored the voluminous exchange of letters between Rome and the East (449–454) as well as the several Roman delegations (449–451) that were sent to Constantinople during the Eutychian controversy.

Eutyches (d. c. 456), the archimandrite of a large monastery in Constantinople, was committed to a kind of Cyrillian and Athanasian fundamentalism and to opposing the heresy of Nestorianism (the founder of which Nestorius (d. after 451), the bishop of Constantinople, failed plausibly to construct a single person as the subject of both christological natures). He concluded that Christ had two natures before the Incarnation, but only one nature afterwards, the union with divinity being so impenetrable as to subsume everything that was human in the Christ. For holding these views, Eusebius, the bishop of Dorylaeum who nearly twenty years earlier had filed a petition charging Nestorius with heresy, decided to file a similar petition against Eutyches. A local synod was held in Constantinople in November 448, which Eusebius and Flavian (d. 449), the bishop of Constantinople, attended and where it was decided that Eutyches should be excommunicated from the church and deposed from his priestly and monastic functions.

This is when Leo was approached in writing by the three key players in the East, whose letters implicitly acknowledged the authority of the apostolic see: Eutyches sent a letter of appeal, the emperor Theodosius sent a letter in support of Eutyches, and Flavian sent a letter requesting confirmation of the synodal sentence he had won against Eutyches. Because Flavian's letter had been delayed, Leo's initial reaction was to listen sympathetically to Eutyches' grounds for appeal and then to ask the emperor for the additional information he required. His impression

of the case changed when he finally received the letter in which Flavian clarified the doctrinal reasons for Eutyches' condemnation. Moved by Flavian's pleas, Leo compiled his christological views in a doctrinal letter known as the *Tome* (449), the significance of which for the formation of catholic christology cannot be overstated. Though ostensibly a letter addressed to Flavian, the *Tome* was actually a formal treatise that synthesized for the churches the Roman view of the Incarnation. It carved a middle ground between the extreme dual-nature christology that characterized the teaching of Nestorius and the extreme single-nature docetism that was the heresy of Eutyches. While its purpose was to resolve the controversy by elucidating christological doctrine, the *Tome* was not readily accepted in the East as the definitive dogmatic statement that Leo intended it to be.

Shortly after the *Tome* was disseminated among the eastern churches, Theodosius convened the Council of Ephesus II (August, 449) under the presidency of Dioscorus, the bishop of Alexandria. During this council the *Tome* was excluded unceremoniously from its proceedings. Although it purported to be an ecumenical council, Ephesus II was in fact a provincial gathering of 130 eastern bishops and clergy, mainly supporters of Eutyches who subscribed to his single-nature docetism and were generally sympathetic to his plight. In the presence of Roman legates, the council members voted to overturn Eutyches' conviction and to pass a sentence of deposition against Flavian and Eusebius, both of whom were later judged to be orthodox. This dramatic series of events unfolded amid a general sense of disarray that was punctuated with threats of physical violence against anyone who refused to cooperate. Disgusted but physically unharmed, the papl legates escaped from the proceedings and returned to Rome, where the council acquired such a reputation for chaos and treachery that Leo coined the phrase 'Latrocinium' or 'Robber Synod' to describe it.

With the legitimacy of the 'synod' in question and with a number of doctrinal and disciplinary matters unresolved, Leo plotted a course to restore ecclesiastical unity. He received appeals from bishops and clergy deposed by the synod; and he made further statements prescribing and clarifying the christological doctrine to which Rome, and by extension, the rest of the Christian empire subscribed. In fostering the sense of Christian unity that defined his ideology of a Christian *romanitas*, Leo was not limited to the ecclesiastical channels that were available to him. Using the same methods that had served him well in persecuting the Manichaeans, Leo formed an alliance with the western imperial court

by soliciting the help of the emperor Valentinian, his wife Eudoxia, and his mother Placidia. They were to write letters to their relative Theodosius, asking him to convene an ecumenical council to review the findings of the Robber Synod.

After much negotiation between Rome and the eastern court it was eventually agreed that a new council would be convened in the city of Chalcedon, a suburb of Constantinople. 520 bishops, including three Roman legates, attended the council which began on 8 October 451 and concluded on 1 November 451. In the interval between the Robber Synod and the new ecumenical council the political and ecclesiastical situation had shifted considerably. Theodosius, a supporter of Eutyches and Dioscorus and a source of trouble for Leo, was succeeded by the emperor Marcian (emperor, 450–457), who subscribed to a two-nature christology that was much more congenial to Rome's doctrinal views. The situation then changed for the worse, so far as Leo was concerned, when his closest ally, Flavian, apparently died of the wounds or poor treatment he had received during or shortly after the synod. The bishop of Constantinople elected to replace him was Anatolius (d. 458), a shady character of questionable orthodoxy whose connections with Dioscorus made him immediately suspect in the eyes of Leo. In this context of secular political support mixed with a sense of ecclesiastical uncertainty, Leo decided that the new council should not review matters of doctrine, but merely confirm what the *Tome* had settled. (This stipulation eventually resulted in the Chalcedonian synthesis that Christ consisted in two natures united in one person, without confusion, change, division, or separation, a definition that continues to prescribe the nature of Christ for the catholics and for certain of the orthodox churches today.) The council was simply to overturn the decisions of the Robber Synod by restoring orthodox bishops who had been deposed improperly, and by accepting into the fold those who repented sincerely of their willing participation in the debacle that was the Robber Synod. On nearly every score the new council, so far as Rome was concerned, was a success. The acts of the Robber Synod were read into the conciliar record and repudiated; the *Tome* was accepted with only some hesitation; Dioscorus was deposed; and a definition of faith was accepted that reflected and incorporated the doctrinal concerns of the *Tome*.

In one area, Leo objected to the council. The church of Constantinople had pursued its agenda of confirming its place of honor beside the see of Rome, and of securing the jurisdictional privileges that it currently exercised over the eastern dioceses of Pontus, Asia,

and Thrace. Its understanding of the hierarchical relationships within and among these several ecclesiastical regions was perhaps modeled upon Rome's formal extension of jurisdiction over its own metropolitan district in southern Italy and well beyond into the North. It did not necessarily imply an overt threat to Rome's assertion of primacy with respect to the other patriarchal churches. Here, nonetheless, were two very different theories of the relative power exercised by the sees. Whereas Rome saw its primacy as emanating from its inherent authority as the see of St. Peter, the first of the apostles and founder of the apostolic see, the source of prestige claimed by Constantinople was the political distinction it had earned as the New Rome, the center of senatorial and imperial power in the East, whose stability made it an easy rival to the political uncertainty that troubled Rome. Constantinople considered the extension of its jurisdictional privileges among certain of the eastern churches as a ratification of the current state of ecclesiastical affairs. But Rome saw it as an outright threat to the preeminence of the Petrine see and as an intentional slight upon Roman hegemony. The difference in ideology was serious enough that for the next several years letters were exchanged fast and furiously between Leo and Anatolius, the matter never being fully resolved, nor the canon ever rescinded.

During this same period (451–452) the western empire was responding to the pressures exerted upon it by the military threats that the Huns posed. A loosely organized group of eurasian nomads, the Huns had begun a westward expansion along the northern coast of the Black Sea (c. 350) that eventually brought them into the margins of eastern Europe in c. 376 and into Pannonia in the 440's.[150] By this time the various tribes had gradually been absorbed into a more centralized power structure, a hierarchical organization whose leadership under Attila and his brother Blaeda made them a fierce enemy that Rome was pressed to engage in 451.[151] With a coalition of barbarian forces that included the Gepids, Ostrogoths, Suevi, and Sarmatians, Attila marched up the Danube to launch an attack upon Gaul. He perceived this region as a chink in the imperial armor and its alliance of Gallic

[150] P.J. Heather, "The Huns and the End of the Roman Empire in Western Europe," *The English Historical Review* 110, 435 (1995), p. 5; see also idem. *The Goths* (Cambridge, MA, 1996), pp. 97–109.

[151] Heather, "The Huns and the End of the Roman Empire in Western Europe," p. 28.

Romans and barbarians a mere "union of discordant peoples."[152] He underestimated the resolve of the Gallic federation.

The Roman military commander, Aetius, who had previously formed an alliance with the Huns to serve his military purposes, gladly turned the tables to defeat them in a battle that took place on the Catalaunian fields. He exploited his coalition of Romans and barbarians, which consisted of the Visigoths, Burgundians, and Alans whom he had settled in Gaul. On retreat from this disastrous military encounter in the summer of 452, Attila vented his rage upon the cities and towns of northern Italy, which he reached via the territory of Pannonia. Aquileia, Concordia, Altinum, Patavium, Milan, Pavia, and Aemilia were savagely attacked.[153] Of the property damage and human suffering inflicted upon the inhabitants of Milan, the commercial center of the North, one anonymous sermon delivered shortly after the traumatic events reported that houses and churches were destroyed, that members of the laity and clergy were slain, some of whom apparently "lacked the opportunity or will to escape,"[154] and that their belongings "were either plundered by robbers or perished, consumed by fire and sword."[155] A few months later, this rampage ended in the Po valley, Attila's forces never having crossed the range of the Appenine mountains, or as Ambrose once put it bleakly, "the barricade of trees," that was along the route leading toward the city of Rome.[156] The most plausible explanation for the Hunnic retreat was that northern Italy was an inhospitable place, the land ill-suited to maintaining troops and horses. A half century earlier a panegyric by Claudius Claudianus had called the region "a land of death ('regio funesta')" that had inflicted cruel punishments.[157] There is no reason to believe that the arduous condi-

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[152] H. Wolfram, *The Roman Empire and Its Germanic Peoples* (Berkeley, 1997), pp. 136–137.

[153] See Jordanes, *Getica*, 222; Paul the Deacon, *Historia Romana*, 14. 9–13; O.J. Maenchen-Helfen, *The World of the Huns: Studies in Their History and Culture*, ed. M. Knight (Berkeley, 1973), p. 137.

[154] Maenchen-Helfen, *The World of the Huns*, p. 139, discussing Ps. Maximus, *Serm.* 94 in *PL* 57, 469–472; wrongly attributed to Maximus of Turin; see idem. "The Date of Maximus of Turin's *Sermo* 18," *VC* 18, 2 (1964), pp. 114–115.

[155] Ps. Maximus, *Serm.* 94, PL 57, 470C, 471A, 471C; Maechen-Helfen, *The World of the Huns*, p. 138, n. 664.

[156] as Ambrose described the Alps, lamenting the Romans' meager defense against the barbarian tribes. Ambrose, *De excessu fratris [Satyri lib. ii]*, 1.31.

[157] ('Heu regio funesta Getis, heu terra sinistris/ Auguriis calcata mihi, satiare nocentum/Cladibus et tandem nostris inflectere poenis!') ("Alas! Land of death for the Getae, alas! Land tread on by me under such disastrous omens, you will be satiated with the disasters of those who do harm, and will at last be bowed by our punishments.")

tions in the region had improved within the last decades. Their supplies spent and their men and horses overworked during the disastrous invasion of Gaul, the Huns had no better option than to withdraw, unpursued, across the Danube.

Under these favorable circumstances, so far as Roman interests were concerned, Leo undertook a diplomatic mission, accompanied by the ex-consul Avienus (450) and the ex-prefect Trygetius ('praefectus praetorio' or 'praefectus urbis Romae' of 452).[158] Together the three men journeyed to the "Ambuleian district of Venetia at the well-traveled passage of the river Mincius,"[159] where they convinced Attila to retreat peacefully beyond the Danube.[160] At least that is how Prosper of Aquitaine reported the mission, which he saw mainly in the light of the power and effectiveness of sacerdotal intervention: Attila was so overwhelmed by the divinely-guided power of the church, as Leo stood before him dressed in priestly robes, that he ended his campaign in Italy and returned to eastern Europe.[161] Although Prosper cannot be trusted to reveal Attila's motives, he plausibly suggests how Leo's contemporaries viewed the political climate and the capacity of the papal office to shape it. The Huns' invasion of Italy soon after their defeat in Gaul was seen as an indictment upon Aetius and his military acumen and as the result of a political failure that was the larger context for Leo's diplomatic mission. Overexerted by his recent victory, Aetius was condemned by Prosper for having failed so thoroughly to anticipate the Huns' invasion of Italy that he, Aetius, was unprepared to use even the strategic advantage that the Alps provided to stop them.[162]

Claudius Claudianus, *Panegyricus de sexto consulatu Honorii Augusti*, ed. T. Birt, *MGH*, *AA* v. 10 (Berlin, 1892), p. 245, lines 274–276; Maenchen-Helfen, *The World of the Huns*, 139–140.

[158] *PLRE* II, 'Avienus 4', pp. 193–194: By 467, Avienus was one of the two most influential men in Rome; ibid., 'Trygetius 1', p. 1129.

[159] as we learn from Jordanes, *Getica*, 223, ed. Th. Mommsen, *MGH AA* vol. 5 (Berlin, 1882), p. 115.

[160] According to Prosper, Attila ordered his soldiers to refrain from fighting as they departed beyond the Danube. Prosper, *Epit. Chron.*, a. 452, 1367.

[161] 'Ita summi sacerdotis praesentia rex gavisus est' ("So the king rejoiced in the presence of the highest priest"), Prosper, *Epit. Chron.*, a. 452, 1367. Attila the Hun received the embassy graciously ('dignanter'), Prosper said.

[162] Prosper, *Epit. Chron.*, a. 452, 1367. See Muhlberger, *The Fifth-Century Chroniclers*, p. 122, discussing the same. With help from Avitus, who later briefly served as Augustus (455–456), Aetius convinced the Visigoths to fight with the Romans against their common enemy, the Huns, in Gaul. *PLRE* II, 'Fl. Aetius 7', p. 27; *ibid.*, 'Avitus 5', pp. 196–198.

Once he realized the extent of his military error, and the devastation to Italy that would likely ensue, he together with the emperor absconded, leaving the region unprotected by either his troops or the imperial army and, therefore, vulnerable to enemy forces. The image of Italy bereft of its military and imperial leaders, and with only the bishop of Rome to defend it, was a compelling rebuke of the political scene. But it unfairly criticized Aetius, who (as Maenchen-Helfen argues persuasively), in failing to defend the Eastern side of the Alps through which the empire's enemies had historically passed, was merely implementing the same failed military strategy as every other general in the fifth century.[163] Highlighting Aetius' military shortcomings, however, served Prosper's larger purpose in making the diplomatic success of Leo, who was armed only with divine beneficence, appear all the more spectacular. With military intervention no longer an option, the emperor, the senate, and the people of Rome asked Leo, a diplomat seasoned by his earlier mission in Gaul, to undertake the embassy to pacify the Hunnic king.

Although Leo himself never mentions such a mission in any of his letters or sermons, there is no reason to doubt that the event as recorded by Prosper actually took place. The *Liber Pontificalis* corroborates, but does not elaborate upon, Leo's embassy to the king of the Huns for which he was celebrated as having "liberated all of Italy from the peril of the enemy."[164] A letter from several eastern bishops to Symmachus (512/13) further confirms that Leo negotiated with Attila to release Roman Christians, pagans, and Jews who were being held captive by the Huns.[165] That Leo was remembered decades later for having secured the release of those other than Christians is a mark of how deeply his authority was thought to have extended into the secular sphere, and of how significant it was for the bishop of Rome to have undertaken such a diplomatic mission. However the Christians may have perceived Leo's success in turning the Huns from Italy, historical hindsight suggests that their disappearance shortly after the death of Attila in 453 was an impediment to the empire's survival. Their continued military presence during the last few decades had been a source of

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[163] Maenchen-Helfen, *The World of the Huns*, pp. 135–136.

[164] *Liber pontificalis*, 47. See also *The Book of Pontiffs*, trans. R. Davis (Liverpool, 1989), p. 38.

[165] Symmachus, *Ep.*, *PL* 62, 59D–60A, who thought it unusual that Leo released not only Christians, but also Jews and pagans; Maenchen-Helfen, *The World of the Huns*, p. 141.

outside assistance against the same foes, the Goths, Alans, Suevi, Burgundians, and Vandals whom they had earlier forced across the imperial frontier.[166]

With the once formidable Huns shattered amid the tangle of civil war, Valentinian decided that his powerful general Aetius, whom he perceived as a threat to the imperial throne, was no longer needed. During a routine meeting in the palace on 21/2 September 454 Valentinian accused Aetius of treason, swiftly drew his sword, and, with the assistance of his chamberlain Heraclius, committed cold-blooded murder.[167] The immediate reaction was the chilling apprehension that no general remained to check the barbarian migrations. In an act of revenge less than six months later (16 March 455) two of Aetius' bodyguards assassinated Valentinian along with his chamberlain and took the imperial crown to Petronius Maximus, the wealthy patrician and former holder of several high imperial posts who had helped orchestrate Aetius' downfall. News that the imperial succession was now in disarray reached the Vandal king Geiseric, who immediately sent an expedition to Rome both to protect his family's earlier marriage alliances with the imperial court and to exploit the precarious political circumstances there. He was not disappointed.

On Maximus' seventy-seventh day in office, with the Vandals headed toward Rome, he was "torn from limb to limb by his royal servants" and thrown into the Tiber river.[168] Deprived of its political leadership, and without Aetius to defend it, the city of Rome was easily captured by Geiseric and his forces.[169] Prosper construed this disastrous turn of

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[166] Heather, "The Huns and the End of the Roman Empire in Western Europe," p. 38.

[167] Bury, v. 1, p. 299.

[168] Prosper, *Epit. Chron.*, a. 455, 1375: 'a famulis regiis dilaniatus est et membratim'. After only two months in office, Maximus received a report that Geiseric was coming from Africa, whereupon he, Maximus, gave the people and nobility permission to flee with him. Ibid. Amid the chaos that ensued, Maximus' enemies (i.e., the supporters of Valentinian?) killed him, leaving Rome free for the taking. See also ibid., *Chronica Gallica* 623, a. 452, p. 663, which attributes Maximus' murder to an unruly crowd: "Valentinian was murdered by the gates of Rome, after which Maximus acquired the *imperium* for [only] seventy days, for he died during the tumult [raised by] a crowd as a result of the panic caused by the Vandals' [invading]. Soon thereafter, Geiseric entered [the city] and plundered Rome without [setting] fire [to it] or [wielding] the sword." ('V. Valentinianus interficitur foris Romae: post quem Maximus diebus LXX adeptus imperium: nam terrore Wandalorum tumultu vulgi occisus est: et mox ingresso Geserico sine ferro et igne Roma praedata est.').

[169] Prosper, *Epit. Chron.*, a. 455, 1375.

political events not as a sign of the deeper structural changes that were taking place, but as proof of Maximus' moral failings: he had received Valentinian's murderers "as friends," and he had forced Eudoxia to marry him immediately, thereby preventing her from mourning the loss of her husband.[170] In the context of such moral depravity, the bishop of Rome was seen as the most qualified person to step in. Unaccompanied by imperial officials,[171] "Holy bishop Leo went to meet [Geiseric] outside the [city] gates, and, with the help of God, [Leo's] supplication appeased him to such an extent that once all had been surrendered to his power, he refrained from fire, slaughter, and torture."[172] In exchange for sparing the city and its inhabitants a gruesome end, Geiseric and his troops were permitted to abduct Valentinian's wife Eudoxia and their daughter Eudocia to Carthage, to take many thousands of Roman prisoners, and to loot Rome for its treasures. Even Prosper, who was committed to demonstrating that the church wielded secular power, acknowledged tacitly that Leo could do nothing to stop the Vandals from having free rein of the city. The most he could do was replace the consecrated silver services that the Vandals had stolen by melting down the six water-jars at the Constantinian basilica, the two at the basilica of St. Peter's, and the two at St. Paul's which the emperor Constantine had presented. Weighing 100 lbs. each, the silver water-jars provided Leo with the materials needed to replace the consecrated vessels in all the parish churches ('tituli').[173]

It is too easy to dismiss Prosper's account as the pious musings of a personal friend and colleague who was determined to paint a hagiographic portrait of Leo as the most excellent of bishops.[174] More than

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[170] Prosper, Ibid. See Muhlberger, *The Fifth-Century Chroniclers*, p. 126.

[171] Gillett, *Envoys and Political Communication*, pp. 114–115, esp. n. 6, where he discusses later redactions that eliminate the presence of Trygetius and Avienus and fail to mention Leo's imperial commission: Victor of Tunnuna, *Chronicle*, a. 449, ed. C. Cardelle de Hartmann, *CCSL* 173a (Turnhout, 2001); *Liber pontificalis*, 47; Paul the Deacon, *Historia Romana*, ed. H. Droysen, *MGH AA* vol. 2 (Berlin, 1878) xiv, pp. 11–12; Jordanes, *Romana et Getica*, ed. Mommsen, *MGH AA*, vol. 6.1, c. xi.

[172] 'Occurrente sibi extra portas sancto Leone episcopo, cuius supplicatio ita eum deo agente lenivit, ut, cum omnia potestati ipsius essent tradita, ab igni tamen et caede atque suppliciis abstineretur.' Prosper, *Epit. Chron.*, a. 455, 1375.

[173] *Liber pontificalis*, 47.

[174] There were, of course, hagiographic elements in Prosper's narrative, which were repeated in later accounts of diplomatic missions. See, e.g., Maenchen-Helfen, *The World of the Huns*, p. 141, n. 685; ed. G.M. Cook, *The Life of Saint Epiphanius by Ennodius* (Washington, D.C., 1942), pp. 14, 29–31, 96–100, discussing the embassy of bishop

that, it reveals the catholic *intelligentsia* as willing and able to understand the bishop of Rome, as he wished to be understood, as fulfilling such a prominent role in the life of the city without any fear that the secular imperial authorities or the Roman aristocracy, with whom he had formed a productive alliance, would object to his intervention.[175] The portrayal of Leo might have been otherwise. Prosper might have depicted a saintly bishop who came to the aid of the city by means of a miraculous and divine intercession while its secular rulers were either absent or paralyzed with fear. He might have portrayed Leo's participation in secular politics as a sign of the end time, the final siege and destruction of the worldly empire before the coming of the anti-Christ. That he did not is a testament to how committed he was to the idea that Rome was something more than its imperial territories, that it could exist without the presence of the western imperial authority, and that it could be defended in normal, historical time by someone other than the emperor and his imperial forces. Rome, in his eyes, was not simply fading away amid the pressures imposed on it by the barbarian intruders. Nor was it the passive recipient of miraculous intervention. But nor did it matter to Prosper that the sack of Rome by the Vandals and the disappearance of the Huns marked the real sea change in imperial politics, as every imperial regime after Valentinian sought to include Gallo-Roman and Italian senators, Goths, and Burgundians, each of which was determined to stake its claim among the power politics of the western empire.[176] Rome, *writ* large, was simply changing, and Prosper was determined to show that Leo was the bishop best suited to guide that transformation.[177]

Epiphanius of Pavia (Ticinum), to Gundobad, king of Burgundia (495), who released six thousand Italian prisoners without ransom thanks to the interventions of the bishop. A small ransom was demanded for those Italians who had fought against the Burgundians. Ibid. p. 14.

[175] Sotinel, "Le personnel épiscopal: enquête sur la puissance de l'évêque dans la cité," p. 125, asserts that the ecclesiastical institution, which developed in a world where the two types of power were the imperial court and the aristocracy, accepted the political authority and not the social power as its model, especially in Italy where the church shunned any competition with the aristocracy.

[176] Heather, "The Huns and the End of the Roman Empire in Western Europe," p. 32.

[177] As Muhlberger notes, *The Fifth-Century Chroniclers*, p. 131, n. 163, there is no doubt that Prosper portrayed Leo in hagiographic terms: he was 'diligens' (1350), 'sanctus'

The remaining six years of Leo's papacy were spent in the wake of the post-Chalcedonian disputes, attempting to impose a catholic consensus upon the eastern churches. Among the Christians of Egypt, there were grave objections to the imperial definition of faith, which were simmering beneath the surface. The vast majority of them subscribed to a kind of unreconstructed Cyrillianism that was intensely opposed to the Chalcedonianism that their patriarch represented. The volatility of the situation in Egypt came to the fore when the Alexandrian patriarch Proterius, whom the emperor Marcian had installed, was murdered by anti-Chalcedonians shortly after his, Marcian's, death in 457. A nominal Chalcedonian to begin with, Proterius was merely a figure head of the imperial church, placed there by an emperor whose steadfast commitment to Roman orthodoxy provisionally drowned out the vociferousness of the Egyptian opposition.

These were the precarious circumstances under which the imperial throne was assumed by the emperor Leo I (emperor, 457–474), a former military tribune whose vision of a unified church differed markedly from Leo's. There was good reason to doubt the new emperor's commitment to the thoroughly Roman and western variety of catholic unity to which Leo subscribed. A reasonable man whose intent was to fashion a democratic consensus, the emperor pondered the objections of the anti-Chalcedonians by sending an encyclical letter to each of the eastern bishops inquiring whether a new council should be convened. That such a formal reexamination of christological doctrine might take place was the embodiment of Leo's greatest fear, and he spent the years until his death protecting Chalcedon's definitions and decrees against it. Assuaging this fear by silencing dissension, however, came at the expense of the Egyptian churches. Their official separation from the Chalcedonian imperialism that would not embrace them eventually cast Leo's notion of a unified Christian church in an ambiguous light.

The last letters of Leo's papacy were immersed in these very issues. He died, the matter only temporarily resolved, in 461. Although he was initially buried in the vestibule of St. Peter's, his body was moved three times: in 688 by pope Sergius, in 1607 to the new Basilica of St. Peter, and finally in 1715 to its current location in the same basilica beneath an altar dedicated to him. Commonly acknowledged as 'the Great'

(1358, 1369, 1375), 'beatissimus' (1367), and he relied on the help of God (1367, 1375), all of which accounted for his success in this world.

and honored as a saint since the early church, Leo was formally recognized as a 'doctor of the church' by a decree issued by pope Benedict XIV in 1754.[178] He is commemorated in the East on February 18th and in the West on November 10th.[179]

[178] Benedict XIV, "Pont. Max. Opera omnia," v. 18, "Bullarium," tom. 3, part 2 (Prati, 1847), p. 205. "It was due to his excelling virtue, his teaching, and his most vigilant zeal as shepherd of his people, that he won from our forefathers the title Great. In expounding the deeper mysteries of our faith and vindicating it against the errors that assail it, in imparting disciplinary rules and moral precepts, the excellence of his teaching is so radiant with the majestic richness of priestly eloquence and has so won the admiration of the world and the enthusiasm alike of Councils, Fathers and writers of the Church, that the fame and reputation of this wisest of popes can hardly be rivaled by any other of the Church's holy doctors."

[179] Gore, *Leo the Great*, p. 136.

CHAPTER ONE

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ROME AND THE WESTERN CHURCHES

1. *A controversy develops with the see of Arles in southern Gaul*

Less than a decade after Alaric, the king of the Goths, sacked Rome in 410, the Roman imperial administration invited the Goths to settle in southwestern Gaul. This was one of the great ironies of the Gallic experience, that the same barbarian people who had brought the empire into political and spiritual crisis should now be welcomed as guests among the Gallic aristocracy, whose lands, or their tax revenues, were divided among them.[1] It accounts at least partly for the ambivalence that the Gallic elite felt toward Rome, as the political apparatus that was the source of their military protection was also perceived as the kernel of their undoing.

One of the central administration's most seasoned representatives, the patrician Constantius who served briefly as emperor in 421, negotiated the treaty (418) that settled the Goths as a federation ('foederates') in the territories along the western seaboard of Gaul, the province of Aquitania secunda and several neighboring cities ('civitates'), a region that extended from Toulouse to the area north of the Bordeaux valley.[2] The Goths were recent allies who had fought on the side of Rome in northern Spain, where they subdued the Alans and Vandals. Both to reward their efforts and to serve Roman interests, the Goths' military services were enlisted again when they were settled in Gaul in order to address the threat of civil unrest and to assist Rome against the Asding Vandals.[3] The reasoning was that exploiting their martial resources was

[1] It is uncertain whether the Goths shared lands "and/or their tax revenues," or whether there was some sort of reassignment of tax revenues. See T.S. Burns, "The settlement of 418," in J. Drinkwater, H. Elton, *Fifth-century Gaul: a crisis of identity?* (Cambridge, New York, 1992), pp. 49–63, esp. p. 58.

[2] Prosper, *Epit. Chron.*, a. 419, 1271. Thompson, "The Settlement of the Barbarians in Southern Gaul," *JTS* 46, p. 65; Heather, *Goths and Romans, 332–489*, p. 221.

[3] T.S. Burns, "The settlement of 418," p. 57.

an efficient way to defend the region and that granting them territory might pacify them and control their movements.

The plan was not entirely successful. Though fueled by different circumstances, the similar spirit of aggression that brought Alaric into Rome in 410 drove Theodoric I, the new Visigothic king, to attack the city of Arles in 425 and eleven years later, Narbonne, which suffered greatly until *comes* Litorius (who was second in command to the famous Roman general Aetius) intervened and spared the region from further devastation.[4] The tables were turned a few years later when Litorius was defeated (alongside the Huns in his service) by the Visigoths at Toulouse in 439.[5] These ever-shifting loyalties were a dramatic signal to the people of Gaul that the alliance between the empire and the Visigoths was precarious and that their interests did not necessarily coincide. That Rome continued to honor the treaty was a further indication of the inadequacy of a political-military apparatus which, having brought the Visigoths among them, no longer had the resources to protect its interests independently in Gaul. In the light of this military insufficiency and political instability, the Gallic people both longed for and despised the Roman imperial administration that they had hoped would protect them.

The intellectual response that such ambivalence inspired is well captured by the literary creations of the Gallic-Christian aristocracy, most notably in the works of the priest and monk, Salvian of Marseille (b. c. 400/405).[6] Originally from Trier in the North, which he referred to

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[4] While Alaric attacked Rome, with no intention of holding the city, as a result of failed negotiations over land for settlement, Theodoric attacked Arles in a direct effort to acquire control over it. For Prosper's account of the rise and fall of Litorius, see Prosper, *Epit. Chron.*, a. 436, 1324; *ibid.*, a. 439, 1335. On the Goths' invasion of Gaul, see *ibid.*, a. 436, 1324: "The Goths disturbed the resolution of peace and seized many towns near their own bases, having especially attacked the town of Narbonne." 'Gothi pacis placita perturbant et pleraque municipia vicina sedibus suis occupant, Narbonensi oppido maxime infesti.'

[5] Prosper, *Epit. Chron.*, a. 436, 1324; See É. Griffe, *La Gaule Chrétienne à l'époque Romaine*: *L'Église des Gaules au Ve siècle* vol. II (Paris, 1966), p. 31. Prosper attributed the Romans' military failure to Litorius' paganism: he had consulted the *haruscipes* before going into battle. Prosper, *Epit. Chron.*, a. 439, 1335. See Maenchen-Helfen, *The World of the Huns*, pp. 267–270. Note that the 'Goths' become 'Visigoths' after their settlement in Gaul.

[6] On the growing importance of literary achievement as a means of conveying aristocratic status among the *intelligentsia* of late Roman Gaul, see R.W. Mathisen, "The Theme of Literary Decline in Late Roman Gaul," *Classical Philology* 83 (1988), pp. 45–52. That the secular world was generally in decline was explored by several Gallic authors. Idem. *Roman Aristocrats in Barbarian Gaul* (Austin, TX, 1993), pp. 43–44.

sentimentally as "the most excellent city of Gaul ('urbs excellentissima')," Salvian and his family moved to the southernmost region of Provence, in the area of Marseille and Arles, after the barbarians conquered northern Gaul and the praetorian prefect moved his base of operations from Trier to Arles.[7] The city that he left behind had been taken by barbarians on four separate occasions by the time he wrote *De Gubernatione Dei* in 445. With the Roman authorities no longer able to protect them, the deplorable conditions that were the result of these conquests plunged the city into lawlessness. What interested Salvian even more than the devastation inflicted by the sieges was the moral turpitude and profligacy that was said to have followed. "I myself have seen at Trier [i.e., in 406] men of noble birth and the highest honor, who, though already pillaged and plundered, were actually less ruined in property than in morals… Crimes increased by the very blows with which they were checked that you would think that the punishment for the offenses themselves was, as it were, the mother of vice."[8] The same power of the state that, prior to the sieges, had maintained law and order among all segments of Gallic society was now transformed into the instrument of the nobility's undoing. There is no better example of the ambivalence that many felt toward the Rome that had abandoned them than this double-edged sword that was the new way of conceiving the punishment inflicted by the Gallo-Roman legal system. Salvian resolved that ambivalence awkwardly by leveling recriminations against the moral inadequacies of the Gallic aristocracy in order to account for the social disorder that was the result of the sieges.[9]

After leaving his devastated city of Trier and moving to Aquitaine, Salvian joined the ranks of the ascetics on the island of Lerins, the famous ascetic community founded (c. 410) off the coast of southern Gaul, where he taught rhetoric in the company of such Gallic notables as Honoratus of Lerins (d. 429) and Hilary of Arles (d. 449), who counted Salvian among Honoratus' closest friends.[10] Their practice of asceticism was perhaps connected to the burgeoning ideology of the Christian Gallic aristocracy, which attributed their current misfortunes not to the military inadequacies of the Roman administration, but to

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[7] Salvian, *De Gubernatione Dei*, 6.13, *MGH AA*, vol. 1; trans. J.F. O'Sullivan, *The Writings of Salvian, the Presbyter*, *The Fathers of the Church* 3 (New York, 1947), pp. 3–4.

[8] Salvian, *De Gubernatione Dei*, 6.13, *MGH AA*, vol. 1.

[9] On dissatisfaction with Roman rule leading to cooperation with barbarians, see Mathisen, *Roman Aristocrats in Barbarian Gaul*, p. 68.

[10] trans. O'Sullivan, *The Writings of Salvian, the Presbyter*, p. 5.

the divine chastisements of an angry God who punished the moral failings of the social elite by undermining the very structures that had sustained them.[11] Cultivating a refined, aristocratic variety of asceticism that projected the image of rigor fueled these lerinians' ambitions to worldly power[12] by constructing a viable response to the moral depravity that they claimed to have witnessed among Christian and pagan alike, and that they argued had contributed to the success of the barbarian sieges. Amid the establishment of the Visigoths in Aquitaine, amid the sense of helplessness that likely ensued, what distinguished the southern Gallic response to the barbarian settlements was this shared view that individual men and women might claim the same power, which earlier had been exercised by the Roman state, to shape their political and ideological destiny. Their task as they saw it was simply to identify and then put into practice a variety of asceticism that they could live with, something well-defined and distinctive enough both to suit their aristocratic sensibility and to address the perceived moral laxity of their times.

While it is not an exaggeration to say that the Gallic *intelligentsia* was profoundly aware that the Roman empire, and Gaul in particular, was in a state of social and political crisis, not every Gallic author who interpreted those events cast them in the same punishing light of moral recrimination. This is made abundantly clear by examining the entries of the anonymous Gallic chronicler (452) for the decade of the 440's: the deserted city of Valence was divided among the Alans; the British provinces were under Saxon rule; the Alans were given the lands of northern Gaul by Aetius to share with its inhabitants, who soon expelled them by force; Sapaudia was divided among the Burgundians; and Carthage was captured by the Vandals.[13] Although the chronicler included only two entries for Gaul for the entire decade,[14] they are noteworthy for their thinly-veiled hostility toward a Roman state that permitted settlements of the Alans in northern Gaul and of the Burgundians in Sapaudia, the same barbarians who had imperiled the

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[11] On the abandonment of a triumphalist view of history, see C. Leyser, "'This Sainted Isle': Panegyric, Nostalgia, and the Invention of Lerinian Monasticism," in eds. W.E. Klingshirn, M. Vessey, *The Limits of Ancient Christianity: essays on late antique thought and culture in honor of R.A. Markus* (Ann Arbor, 1999), p. 190.

[12] See ibid., p. 193.

[13] *Chronica Gallica a. CCCCLII*, a. 440–448, 124–133.

[14] The chronicler described the Alans' military incursions into Gaul in the year 442. Ibid., a. 442, 127.

region earlier. The lack of further commentary highlights the author's reluctance to criticize openly any segment of the Roman state, even the controversial Aetius, whose policy of settling barbarians in Gaul was surely questioned by at least some among the landed aristocracy.[15] The sense that a military crisis was unfolding, that political transformation was inevitable, that the 440's contained nothing worth recording other than military adversity is made vivid by his decision to present that adversity in quick succession, unencumbered by explicit commentary of any kind. It spoke volumes about a Gallic state of mind that was reluctant to consider how responsible the Roman military and political apparatus really was for its failure to contain adequately the barbarian sieges.[16]

While Leo was still a deacon for the church of Rome, he visited Gaul on the diplomatic mission in 439 to resolve a dispute between Aetius and Albinus.[17] Although he was not to return, during the course of his papacy he became deeply involved in a controversy with one of its leading bishops, Hilary of Arles, over Hilary's exercise of episcopal power in northern and southern Gaul. At stake was both the extent to which Rome might reasonably expect to exercise hegemony over the western provincial churches, as well as the shape that such hegemony might take. This was the ecclesiastical counterpart to the sort of intellectual problem involving Rome and its relationship to empire that Salvian and others among the Gallic aristocracy were grappling with in the light of the barbarian settlements and conquests. The problems were similar for several reasons: both involved coming to terms with the fact that exercising Roman hegemony, whether in the secular or ecclesiastical sphere, was largely a matter of convincing those in the provinces that Rome was the center of empire as it was the center of the church, especially for regions that were weighed down by the influx of barbarians. Both spheres implicitly asked the provinces to acknowledge that Rome

[15] Of course there were many who were quite willing to cooperate with their barbarian neighbors, even to the point of socializing in barbarian circles. Mathisen, *Roman Aristocrats in Barbarian Gaul*, pp. 67–70. Others, though, attempted to resist. Ibid., pp. 56–57.

[16] Whittaker argues that the impression of "chaos and pessimism" that many of the 4th- and 5th-century sources provide is connected to the classical Roman frontier ideology, which "was based on the idea of expansion and of control of the barbarians beyond the provinces…" C.R. Whittaker, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire: A Social and Economic Study* (Baltimore, 1994), pp. 194–195.

[17] See Introduction. 6, above.

was that center at a time when it was becoming increasingly difficult to make such a claim. And both were challenged by the ambivalence that this difficulty generated.

How this ambivalence played out among Gallic attitudes toward the central administration has already been considered. Within the ecclesiastical sphere it unfolded amid the tension between embracing the claims of papal hegemony for the legitimacy to the Gallo-Roman hierarchy that such leadership provided and then simultaneously resenting those claims for being weak, ineffectual, and capable of being exercised only through the few intellectual avenues that were available to it. Rome, in other words, did not have the capacity simply to enforce its claims to power over the western provincial churches. These outlying churches needed to be convinced that Rome as the center of christendom was a vivid idea that was compelling enough to replace a more languishing one, which was becoming ever more to difficult to defend, that secular Rome remained the center of an empire that was being gradually transformed by the influx of migrating and conquering barbarians and by shifting loyalties.

How Leo's interventions in Gaul contributed to this discussion and provided a definitive outline for it must be considered from several vantage points: that of Leo himself, that of his nemesis Hilary of Arles, and that of the contemporary reader attempting to make sense of events that have been refracted through the lens of the extant sources. Sifting through the various accounts will illuminate the competing ideas among them, enabling the deeper concerns that shaped such tensions to emerge.

Leo described his dispute with Hilary in a letter (1 July 445) addressed to the bishops of Vienne, the ecclesiastical center in southern Gaul whose jurisdictional privileges would have been most directly affected by the actions of Hilary and whose support Leo surely coveted.[18] The basic facts of the controversy, as Leo understood them, were these: a man named Chelidonius, the bishop of Besançon, the metropolis of the province of Maxima Sequanorum in northern Gaul, had been deposed by Hilary at a local synod, where it was determined that Chelidonius had married a widow in violation of the canons.[19] To appeal that decision, Chelidonius, accompanied by several friends, made the

[18] Leo, *Ep.* 10, 1 July 445, *Divinae cultum*, Jaffé 407. Marseille, Narbonne, and Arles were the other major ecclesiastical centers in the region.

[19] We know from the *Vita* of Romanus of St. Claude that Chelidonius came from

rather arduous trip from Besançon to Rome, where he presented his case to Leo. Hilary, too, hastened to Rome in order to defend the decision of the synod. In the papal chambers Leo reviewed the minutes of the synod and conducted a new investigation. Chelidonius and his witnesses offered testimony in his defense that Leo found persuasive, while Hilary said nothing to convince him that the findings of the Gallic synod were justified.[20] Harsh words were exchanged between them that the letter merely alludes to: "The 'secrets of his heart' produced [utterances] that no layman could express and no priest listen to. I admit, brothers, that we were grieved and that we tried to cure this pride of his mind with the remedy of our patience. We did not want to exacerbate those wounds that he inflicted on his soul continually with his insolent retorts."[21] Whatever Hilary might have said, it was disturbing enough to Leo that he overturned the decisions of the Gallic synod without the slightest hesitation: Chelidonius had not married a widow and should therefore be restored to his see.[22]

The facts as they were perceived and recounted in Gaul are rehearsed in the *Vita* of Hilary, composed by Honoratus of Marseille in the decades following his death.[23] There Hilary is shown traveling frequently to northern Gaul in order to visit his friend Germanus of

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Besançon. See *Vita Romani*, *MGH*, *Script. rer. meroving.*, vol. 3, p. 134, n. 5. See also Griffe, *La Gaule Chrétienne* vol. 2 (1966), p. 200, n. 70.

[20] Leo, *Ep.* 10.3, Jaffé 407. That he was merely responding to an appeal sent by Chelidonius' supporters in Gaul made the proceedings at Rome legitimate according to Leo.

[21] Ibid.

[22] From the *fasti* of Besançon we learn that Chelidonius was returned to his see after Inportunus, whom Hilary had installed, was expelled. Duchesne, *Fastes* 3.198, 212, cited by R.W. Mathisen, *Ecclesiastical Factionalism and Religious Controversy in Fifth-Century Gaul* (Washington, D.C., 1989), p. 162. Leo, *Ep.* 10.3, Jaffé 407. "We decree ('decernimus') that those who cannot excuse their action are not to be admitted, or, if they already have been, they are to be removed… The judgment ('sententia') brought forth against Chelidonius would have stood had the truth of the charges been proved." The rule would have been familiar in Gaul. See the Council of Valence AD 374, c. 1, Mansi, 3.492–493. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Gallic churches took the allegations against Chelidonius seriously. The rule was similarly followed by Leo, who issued a papal decretal (in *Ep.* 4, 10 October 443, *Ut nobis gratulationem*, Jaffé 402) against ordaining men who had been or currently were married to widows. In *Ep.* 10, he applied that same ecclesiaistical law not only to the bishops, but to the clergy of the lower ranks as well. He was just as adamant that those charged falsely should be acquitted, a principle that he applied to the case of Chelidonius when he overturned the decision of the Gallic synod. Leo, *Ep.* 10.3, Jaffé 407.

[23] *Vita Hilarii*, 21, eds. S. Cavallin, P-A. Jacob, *Honorat de Marseille*, *La Vie d'Hilaire d'Arles*, *SC* 404 (Paris, 1995), p. 136.

Auxerre (d. 448). Together they improved the ecclesiastical administration of the Gallic cities by "handling the life of the bishops and ministers, as well as their progress and transgressions."[24] The implication was that Hilary had every right to participate in the ecclesiastical affairs of northern Gaul because his presence there was justified and contributed to the supervision of the churches.[25] (That was a far cry from the officious intermeddler that Leo painted Hilary to be.) Hilary was on such a visit when the matter of Chelidonius was brought to his attention by certain members of the Gallic aristocracy who were accompanied by a group of ordinary people. Two charges were brought against him: that he had taken a widow as his wife, and that he had condemned several people to capital punishment when he served in the secular administration.[26] An examination of both charges made before the local synod that Hilary organized in northern Gaul revealed that Chelidonius was guilty and should be removed from his episcopal see.

That only the first charge was mentioned by Leo begs the question for the contemporary reader of which aspect of each account is plausible. While the first charge is well-documented, appearing in both Leo's letter to the bishops of Vienne and in the *Vita* of Hilary, the second more serious charge appears only in the *Vita*. Because capital punishment was considered to be synonymous with murder, anyone who administered that punishment automatically became ineligible for the clergy. To report that the synod found such a grievous accusation credible surely made the deposition of Chelidonius seem that much more reasonable. But can this version of the events be trusted? The purpose of the *Vita* was to present Hilary in the best possible light well after the dispute with Rome had ended and the consequences of its outcome

[24] Ibid. '… sacerdotum ministrorumque vitam, nec non profectus excessusque tractabat.'

[25] Ibid. "Regarding his excursions, who will elaborate appropriately upon how much profit his presence brought to the cities of Gaul through his frequent petitions to St. Germanus?" 'In excursibus autem quis, ut dignum est, explicabit, quantum eius praesentia profectum contulerit civitatibus Gallicanis sanctum Germanum saepius expetendo…'?

[26] Ibid. "The nobility and commoners … imputing in addition that Chelidonius had taken a widow as his wife—which the authority of the apostolic see and the statutes of the canons prohibit—and they insisted that when he was serving in the secular administration he had condemned several people to capital punishment." '… nobilium et mediocrium …, astruentes Celidonium internuptam suo adhibuisse consortio—quod apostolicae sedis auctoritas et canonum prohibent statua—, simul ingerentes saeculi administratione perfunctum capitali aliquos condemnasse sententia.'

had been absorbed into the Gallic tradition. With the passage of time, Hilary's dispute with Rome had likely acquired a legendary quality, as stories circulated to defend him and the Gallic point of view that he represented (the charge that Chelidonius had administered capital punishment being perhaps among them). This is not to suggest that Leo did not similarly intend to make his case against Hilary persuasive, or that he was incapable of strategically omitting the second charge.

There are two reasons that we should dismiss the possibility that Leo purposefully and deviously distorted the record. First, later accounts, including the *Vita*, contain no hint of such a duplicitous plan. And second, attached to Leo's letter were the minutes of the ecclesiastical proceedings that he held in Rome, during which testimony was heard from Chelidonius and his friends, as well as from Hilary. Ecclesiastical personnel and clergy were also likely to have been present there, including the stenographer who was responsible for producing the transcript. These are the witnesses of Leo's version of the events who could have verbally corroborated or denied his record of the proceedings. When Leo told the bishops of Vienne that Hilary had nothing reasonable to add in support of the deposition of Chelidonius, he tacitly confirmed that no second charge had been made against the bishop.

For a description of the proceedings of the Gallic synod the *Vita* is our best account. From it we learn that many bishops throughout the region attended the synod; that the case was examined fairly; that testimony from witnesses confirmed the accusation; and that a fair and just sentence was passed.[27] It comes as no surprise that a *Vita* committed to celebrating the virtues of Hilary should present this positive version of the synod. While its details cannot be confirmed, corroborating evidence that such a trial did take place can be found in the *Vita* of Romanus that was written by St. Claude in the sixth century. There we learn simply that Romanus met Hilary at Besançon, where clerics had been summoned to hear the case against Chelidonius.[28] Although

[27] Ibid., 'Conveniunt ex aliis locis probatissimi sacerdotes; res omni ratione prudentiaque discutitur; accusatio testimoniis confirmatur; adhibetur vera simplexque definitio, ut quem scripturarum regulae removebant, voluntate propria se removere deberet.' "The most upright bishops came together from various places; the matter was examined with the utmost reason and prudence; the accusation was confirmed with testimony; a true and simple sentence was passed, so that the one whom the rules of Scripture removed ought to remove himself willingly."

[28] See Mathisen, *Ecclesiastical Factionalism*, p. 149, who notes that Hilary did not summon the council on his own authority, as many commentators have assumed. *Vita Romani* 18.

Leo similarly attests to the existence of a synod, he diminished its significance by reducing the full-scale proceedings that the *Vita* described merely to the judgment ('sententia') of the case and the opinion that Hilary produced. Nothing was said about the testimony of the witnesses, or about the presence of important bishops. Although it was in his interests to do so, nowhere did Leo claim that such a synod had not taken place, or that Chelidonius had been deprived of ecclesiastical due process. Both claims would have supported his case against Hilary. By his silence, therefore, Leo tacitly confirms that the account in the *Vita* is plausible.

For the proceedings of a second case that was tried in Rome, Leo is our only witness. Projectus of Narbonne, an ailing bishop whom Hilary had deposed and replaced, came to Leo's attention when he received two letters asking for Rome's intervention. One was from Projectus himself, and the other from his congregation, "which was supported by numerous individual signatures" ('numerosa singulorum subscriptione firmata').[29] The complaint was that Hilary had unjustly and uncanonically deposed him because of his illness, although he was entitled to remain functioning in his episcopal see. "It had not been permitted for their bishop Projectus to be sick, his bishopric had been transferred to another without his knowledge, and Hilary, the invader, introduced a successor for a man still alive, as if [filling] a vacant see," as Leo put it irately.[30] To address the problem, Leo apparently restored Projectus to his see and removed the bishop whom Hilary had consecrated to replace him. Leo adduced two well-settled canons to support this ruling that a bishop was not to be removed from his see without just cause, and that bishops who died in office were to be replaced by the metropolitan of that province. Neither canon resolved the matter directly, but interpreting the canons together suggested to him that a bishop was never to be removed from his episcopal see while still living. Hilary's version of the story is lost, his *Vita* strangely silent on the matter of Projectus. The canons of the Council of Orange (8 November 441) over which Hilary presided shed some light on what might have been influencing the Gallic point of view. Of the thirty

[29] Leo, *Ep.* 10.4, Jaffé 407.

[30] Leo, *Ep.* 10.4, Jaffé 407. 'Projecto episcopo suo aegrotare liberum non fuisset, eiusque sacerdotium in alium praeter suam notitiam esse translatum, et tamquam in vacuam possessionem ab Hilario pervasore haeredem viventis inductum.'

disciplinary canons promulgated by the council, one of them decreed that an infirm bishop was to be removed from office until he regained his health.[31] To support his case during the proceedings held in Rome, Hilary may well have argued that his actions against Projectus were consistent with that ecclesiastical law.

Here was the underlying conflict of ecclesiastical law that was the deeper tension driving the controversy. It was based upon two rather different models of ecclesiastical jurisprudence that were rooted in different conceptions of power. The one assumed that laws emanating from the center were directly applicable to any number of situations that arose in the provinces. The other subscribed to the view that local synods were best equipped to handle the exigencies of local problems, so long as the outcome did not contradict canons that had already addressed the matter. Of the two ways of thinking, the latter was more closely tied to the model put in place by the Roman secular administrative system, the laws of which certainly governed the provinces, but whose imperial officials intervened only when the provincial governors demanded it. Both ways of thinking acknowledged Rome as the center of power. But the first saw its exercise as hierarchical, to be administered, rather than interpreted, by the local officials. The second saw its exercise as diffuse and relational, the power that originated from Rome being reconstituted by local officials who were granted the autonomy needed to resolve disputes that might not have been contemplated by the central legal system. In subscribing to the first set of views, Leo thought that the decisions of local synods were never to take precedence over the canons of the ecumenical councils or over the papal decretals that were the most visible expression of Roman power. Hilary infringed upon that power: "because he thinks that he is subject to no law, that he is restrained by the decrees of no Lordly institutions, through new tactics of usurpation he departs from your custom and ours by appropriating what is not lawful and by neglecting [traditions] that he should have protected."[32] In following a local law that he himself had devised, Hilary had threatened to usurp the power of Rome by undermining the principle that was the condition of its continuing

[31] Among the fifteen bishops from the region of southern Gaul who were present at the council was the metropolitan of Vienne. Griffe, *La Gaule Chrétienne*, vol. 2, p. 158.

[32] Leo, *Ep.* 10.1, Jaffé 407. 'cum nulli se subditum legi, nullis institutionis Dominicae credit regulis contineri, a vestro nostroque, per novae usurpationis ambitum, more desciscens, praesumendo illicita, et quae custodire debuit, negligendo.'

effectiveness: laws were issued from and then interpreted by only the ecclesiastical center.

That Leo envisioned a legal system whose authority emanated from Rome did not mean that he assigned no legal capacity to the local hierarchy and people. The sort of ecclesiastical decision-making that he conceived of gave the highest priority to the views of the local community, so long as those views were circumscribed by the boundaries that the central laws had prescribed. Clergy, nobles, and ordinary people were to be consulted in episcopal consecrations, their opinions sought after, and their testimony given, because these were "the procedures customarily observed in the ordinations of bishops by those who know the decrees ('regulae') of the fathers."[33] He was correct in ascribing such procedures to earlier papal rulings. Most recently, pope Caelestine had said that the ordination of bishops required the consent of the clergy, the testimony of esteemed persons in the city, and the approval of the orders and the laity.[34] Within the channels carved out by Rome, the local community was expected to participate in the application of its ecclesiastical laws.

The reality was that Rome could not have anticipated all the local problems that the bishops in the provinces were facing. Because Rome was so ill-equipped to intervene in such matters, it is reasonable to expect that Hilary should assign to himself the responsibility of administering the region, through which he traveled to depose and install men into bishoprics that were strictly speaking not his own. While Hilary's point of view has been preserved by sources committed to representing his actions as being threatening to Rome, even the most cautious interpretation suggests that he was acting as if he were the metropolitan bishop for the entire territory of southern Gaul. Assigning himself such wide-reaching powers was interpreted by Rome as threatening to the ecclesiastical hierarchy, because it was through that circumscribed hierarchy that Rome exercised its hegemony in the region. This model of ecclesiastical leadership reflected the application of the canons because it issued from the top downward in a continuous stream that flowed through the various local church officials into the farthest regions of the provinces. That stream was interrupted, so far as Leo was concerned, when Hilary, darting through cities and towns, arrived uninvited and "departed suddenly, taking many trips with a quick pace,

[33] Ibid., 10.4, Jaffé 407.
[34] See Caelestine, 26 July 428, *Cuperemus quidem*, Jaffé 369.

running around distant provinces with such haste that he seems to have desired glory for buffoonish speed, rather than for the moderation of a bishop."[35] His penchant for unannounced arrivals and sudden departures was seen as a disruption to a hierarchy grounded in the stable predictability of each of its members.

The most striking image of Rome's incapacity to administer Gaul effectively was that of Hilary accompanied by a group of soldiers whom he gathered to install bishops into vacant sees:[36] "A band of soldiers follows the bishop through the provinces, and with the boldness of the armed guard supporting [him], it serves in invading churches by force that have lost their own bishops," as Leo put it bluntly.[37] The image spoke vaguely of the Gallic ambivalence toward a Roman state that was both well-represented by its military presence and, at the same time, threatened by its inability to control that presence by any means other than the pleading words of a pope, who saw in Hilary's use of military force a brazen threat to papal hegemony in the region. That is assuming, of course, that Leo's account can be trusted. The *Vita Romani* confirms that an unnamed patrician accompanied by the prefect of Gaul had ordered military troops to facilitate Hilary's succession into the bishopric of Arles following the death of his relative and predecessor, Honoratus (who is not to be confused with Hilary's biographer, Honoratus of Marseilles). Although the prefect cannot be identified, Mathisen argues that the 'patrician' whose favor Hilary had won was Aetius, who was serving as the *magister utriusque militiae* at the time.[38] This

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[35] Leo, *Ep.* 10.5, Jaffé 407. '… improvisus abscessit, cursu … celeri itinera multa conficiens, et per longinquas provincias tanta immaturitate discurrens, ut videatur gloriam de scurrili velocitate potius quam de sacerdotali moderatione captasse.' And as the congregation of Projectus reported: "He left before we knew he had come."

[36] Mathisen, *Ecclesiastical Factionalism*, pp. 152–153, has uncovered six metropolitans who were appointed from the Lerins party during this time: "Hilary of Arles and Claudius of Vienne in Viennensis, Ingenuus of Embrun in Alpes Maritimae, Projectus' unknown replacement at Aix in Narbonensis Secunda, Eucherius of Lyons in Lugdunensis Prima, and Inportunus of Besançon in Maxima Sequanorum." In southern Gaul, only Venerius of Marseilles and Rusticus of Narbonne were powerful enough to oppose the Lerins party.

[37] Leo, *Ep.* 10.6, Jaffé 407. 'Militaris manus … per provincias sequitur sacerdotem, et armati praesidii praesumptione suffulto ad invadendas per tumultum famulatur ecclesias, quae proprios amiserint sacerdotes.'

[38] Aetius interacted with other ecclesiastical officials in Gaul as well, including bishop Orientius of Auch, who in 439 served as an ambassador to the Goths, and the several unnamed bishops whom Anianus of Orléans reportedly encountered when he informed Aetius of the approaching Huns. Mathisen, *Ecclesiastical Factionalism*, p. 155.

was the sort of military connection Hilary could have used in rounding up his band of escorts. It is just as plausible that Hilary was acting as a "typical Roman landlord," as Whittaker has suggested, "when he raised his 'armed band' as a 'detestable irregular force.'"[39]

How powerless Leo was to challenge this scenario can be gathered from his limited response to it, which was based largely on his interpretation of two ecclesiastical laws. First, by installing bishops who were unknown to the community into vacant episcopal sees, Hilary deprived the people of their canonical right to offer testimony on the character of the men who were chosen to govern them.[40] The implication was that armed escorts were needed to carry out the consecrations because the communities receiving such bishops disapproved of the men whom Hilary selected: "Just as a man who is known and proven is peaceably requested," said Leo, "so when an unknown man is introduced, he must be imposed by force."[41] Second, Leo urged individual metropolitans to reject Hilary's consecrations by defending "by the right that [he] restored to them" the consecration of bishops in their own provinces.[42] There was little more he could do than encourage the metropolitans to exercise a right that was already theirs. Along the same lines, bishops were not to resign from their office in order to transfer their ecclesiastical privileges to Hilary: "If someone, disregarding apostolic sanctions, and placing stock rather in personal favor, wishes to desert his office thinking that he can transfer his own privilege to another, then it is not the one to whom he has yielded [the privilege], but he who ranks above the other bishops of the province in episcopal seniority who is to claim for himself the power of making consecrations."[43] By redirecting the authority to make new ordinations in such instances toward the most

[39] Whittaker, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire*, p. 266.

[40] See Caelestine, 26 July 428, *Cuperemus quidem*, Jaffé 369.

[41] Leo, *Ep.* 10.6, Jaffé 407. 'Ut enim notus qui fuerit et probatus per pacem petitur, ita per vim necesse est, qui ignotus adducitur, imponatur.' Skeptical of such a claim, Mathisen observes that most of the members of the Lerins faction who became bishops (assuming that is what happened here) did so in or near their native regions among those who knew them well. Only the bishops of Arles themselves, such as Honoratus and Hilary, had been appointed outside their native towns. *Ecclesiastical Factionalism*, p. 156.

[42] Leo, *Ep.* 10.6, Jaffé 407. '… restituto sibi per nos jure defendant.'

[43] Ibid. 'Quod si quis negligens apostolicas sanctiones, plus gratiae tribuens personali, sui honoris desertor esse voluerit, privilegium suum in alium transferre posse se credens, non is cui cesserit, sed is qui intra provinciam antiquitate episcopali caeteros praevenit sacerdotes, ordinandi sibi vindicet potestatem.'

senior bishop in the province, Leo attempted to reinstate a hierarchy that had been undermined, perhaps, by Hilary's promises of monetary or personal gain. Did Hilary's connections with the Gallic aristocracy provide the communities with the charitable relief that they needed? Or did his ties to the Roman military apparatus stationed in Gaul offer the illusion of comfort and security for the Gallic people at a time when the Visigoths were invited to settle there and the North had been lost to its invaders? With the ambivalence that Hilary's seizing of power likely generated, he, nonetheless, responded to the inefficiency of an imperial administration that had been perceived as abandoning them, and to the incapacity of an ecclesiastical system whose effectiveness resided mainly in the force of its ideas. It is no surprise, therefore, that at least some among the Gallic communities did not openly object to his intervention.

That Leo punished Hilary ostensibly for his unfair treatment of Chelidonius and Projectus, for his rash and inappropriate consecrations, and for his unseemly connections to the military should not cloud the fact that Rome's main source of power resided in the willingness of the community and of the local church hierarchy to resist such actions. Without that cooperation among the local clergy and people, it meant little that Hilary was no longer to summon synodal meetings, that he was never to intervene in another bishop's jurisdiction, that he was deprived of his authority over the province of Vienne, that he was to retain the office of bishop only in his own see of Arles, and that he was not to be present at or to perform consecrations. To what extent these pronouncements were effective can only be surmised, although there is no evidence that Hilary, duly chastened as he was, continued to call synodal meetings or to perform consecrations.[44] For the remaining decretals Rome simply did not have the power unilaterally to enforce them.

That Rome issued such rulings in spite of its inadequacy suggests that Leo was determined to contain Hilary's movements within the limits circumscribed by the hierarchy. His motivations for doing so are steeped in his relationship to the past and in his association with colleagues in the present, both of which colored his assessment of Hilary's character and of the quality of his theological commitments. Although the tendency among modern readers has been to view the

[44] Ravennius, however, did both. Mathisen, *Ecclesiastical Factionalism*, p. 170. For the view that Leo's decrees did not gain widespread acceptance see ibid., p. 170, n. 122.

matter as a bold attempt on the part of Hilary to usurp the power of Rome, and a rather desperate attempt on the part of the pope to sustain that power in the face of such a looming threat, Leo himself did not envisage the problem in such clear-cut terms. "What does Hilary seek in another's province?" he asked, "Why does he usurp that which none of his predecessors before Patroclus had? For the very thing that seemed to have been granted to Patroclus temporarily by the apostolic see was later rescinded by a better judgment."[45] The implication was that Hilary intended to renew the extensive privileges of jurisdiction and honor that had been granted to Patroclus of Arles when Zosimus (pope, 417–418) was the bishop of Rome. To unravel the complex web of memories and relationships that this allusion to the past implied is to shed light not only on Leo's perceptions, but Hilary's as well. Connecting this past to the present hints at what may have transpired between them when they met as adversaries in Rome.

The story, as Leo and Hilary understood it, really began some thirty years earlier.[46] Only days after becoming the bishop of Rome (22 March 417), Zosimus had become deeply entrenched in reorganizing the ecclesiastical administration of southern Gaul in order to make it function partly on the model of a papal vicariate. In a letter to the seven provinces of Gaul he announced that the bishop of Arles, Patroclus, was newly invested with the more wide-reaching authority of a metropolitan. The bishops of Gaul who wished to be received by the pope were now made to procure letters of introduction (*litterae formatae*) issued by Patroclus, who was responsible for acting as a conduit between Rome

[45] Leo, *Ep.* 10.4, Jaffé 407. 'quid sibi Hilarius quaerit in aliena provincia, et id quod nullum decessorum ipsius ante Patroclum habuit, quid usurpat? cum et ipsum, quod Patroclo a sede apostolica temporaliter videbatur esse concessum, postmodum sit sententia meliore sublatum?' Here I interpret Leo's letter straightforwardly. For a different view, see Mathisen, who portrays Hilary and the bishops of Gaul as powerful isolationists whose policies brought them into conflict with Rome and its plans for extending papal hegemony throughout the empire. He sees the controversy as arising from Hilary's attempts "to secure Gallic ecclesiastical leadership for himself and his colleagues at the same time that Leo himself was seeking extraordinary precedence for himself and the see of Rome." Mathisen, *Ecclesiastical Factionalism*, pp. 145–146.

[46] Zosimus was probably elected with the help of Constantius, who was behind his wide-reaching powers. E. Demougeot, "A propos des interventions du pape Innocent Ier dans la politique séculière," *Revue Historique* 212 (1994), pp. 23–38; see D. Frye, "Bishops as Pawns in Early Fifth-Century Gaul," *JEH* 42 (1991), pp. 354–355, for the view that the power struggle between Constantius and Constantine III for control of southern Gaul, in which Zosimus, Patroclus, Proculus, and others were pawns, decisively shaped ecclesiastical politics in the region. Ibid., pp. 349–361.

and the churches of Gaul.[47] As a metropolitan, moreover, his jurisdictional privileges were no longer confined to parts of Narbonensis Secunda, but were extended to include the entire province, in addition to the provinces of Viennensis and Narbonensis Prima, where he was given the sole authority to ordain its bishops and decide its ecclesiastical cases.[48]

Augmenting his privileges implied, of course, that those of several other episcopal sees had been diminished. Among the three sees whose authority had been curtailed, Vienne, Narbonne, and Marseille, only two of their bishops, Proculus of Marseille and Simplicius of Vienne, vehemently protested the papal decretal. With the help of Venerius of Milan, whose bishopric rivaled Rome, they participated in a synod held at Turin that essentially overturned the decision of Zosimus and restored both bishops to their former metropolitan status. Proculus continued to celebrate ordinations in his capacity as the metropolitan bishop of Marseilles, and Simplicius as that of Vienne. Their claims were rejected, however, by Zosimus in a self-assured letter addressed to the bishops of Vienne and Narbonensis II, which dismissed the decision of the council as non-binding. He reasoned that a statute more ancient and authoritative than this recent synod had made St. Trophimus, who was a missionary sent by Rome to convert Gaul to Christianity, into a metropolitan bishop whose activities were centered in Arles.[49] Zosimus evoked that so-called statute when he bestowed the same extensive privileges upon Patroclus.[50]

This arrangement was conceived as a temporary measure to impose a sense of order amid the difficult social and political conditions that prevailed in the region.[51] It was retracted nearly five years later (422) when Patroclus attempted to exercise those privileges in the church of Lodève. To fill its vacant episcopal see, Patroclus selected a bishop and performed the ordination. The people and clergy whose right it was to confirm the selection rejected this intrusion into the administration

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[47] Zosimus, 22 March 417, *Placuit apostolicae*, Jaffé 328.

[48] except of course for those cases requiring review by Rome. See Griffe, *La Gaule Chrétienne*, vol. 2, p. 148. This was contrary to the decisions of the Council of Turin, AD 398, c. 2, Mansi, 3.861.

[49] Jalland, p. 169.

[50] Zosimus, 29 September 417, *Multa contra*, Jaffé 334. See Griffe, *La Gaule Chrétienne*, vol. 2 (1966), p. 151, n. 32.

[51] Jalland, p. 161. The Goths were settled in Gaul only one year later. See Zosimus, *Ep.* 1.1.

of their see, and said as much to Zosimus' successor Boniface (pope, 418–422). He was a sympathetic listener who understood that the jurisdictional privileges assigned by his predecessor no longer served the interests of a papacy committed to extending its reach through a hierarchy rooted in, and legitimized by, the consent of its clergy and people. Citing a canon (unknown) of the Council of Nicaea (325) to support his view, Boniface revoked the privileges that Zosimus had assigned to Patroclus.[52] The papal decretal was later confirmed by Caelestine (pope, 422–432) in a letter to the bishops of Vienne and Narbonne (428): "According to the decrees of the canons, each province is to be content with its own metropolitan so that they may limit the arrangements that were granted by our predecessor to the bishop of Narbonne; … everyone is to be content with the boundaries granted to him. Let neither appropriate anything in the other's province."[53] This was the history of the controversy that Leo would have absorbed by reading the letters contained in the papal chancery. Together the letters suggested that the privileges extended to Patroclus were temporary, that they had been rescinded by both Boniface and Caelestine, and that bishops were to be chosen by the clergy and the people whom they were elected to serve.

There were two aspects of Hilary's behavior, in particular, that would have persuaded Leo to bring this entire history to bear upon the matter. First, Hilary was ordaining bishops according to the same jurisdictional boundaries that had been assigned by Zosimus. Second, in the light of those ordinations, several members of the clergy and laity had filed complaints against Hilary with Rome. Connecting Hilary with Patroclus would have also highlighted the major difference between them: Patroclus had acted according to a papal decretal, while Hilary, as Leo saw it, acted merely on his own initiative. That there was no formal arrangement between Hilary and Rome made his assumption of metropolitan duties seem that much more disruptive to the flow of papal hegemony in the region.

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[52] Boniface, 11 March 422, *Difficile quidem*, Jaffé 362; see Griffe, *La Gaule Chrétienne*, vol. 2, p. 153, note 35.

[53] Caelestine, 26 July 428, *Cuperemus quidem*, Jaffé 369. 'juxta decreta canonum unaquaeque provincia suo metropolitano contenta sit, ut decessoris nostri data ad Narbonensem episcopum continent constituta; … Sit concessis sibi contentus unusquisque limitibus. Alter in alterius provincia nihil praesumat.' See Griffe, *La Gaule Chrétienne*, vol. 2, p. 153, n. 36.

Because the sources are mostly silent on what Hilary may have been thinking, his actions will have to speak louder than words: during the dead of winter, Hilary made the trip to Rome, on foot, uninvited. "He did not consider the harshness of winter, nor the grating din of [crossing] the Alps; he did not tremble at the transparent shards of icy crust that had to be broken [with every step], nor at the sharp spikes hanging down from above like the blade of a sword, solidified by the force of the cold with the terror of a lethal freeze, as if imitating a threatening right hand."[54] This is the scene that Hilary's *Vita* portrays, a man who risked life and limb to submit to the authority of Rome. That he made the trip barefooted suggests that a more complicated dynamic was operating, in which the ascetic prowess that was the image of Gallic monasticism was here displayed openly for everyone to see. This uneasy juxtaposition of Gallic humility and ascetic confidence would have raised suspicion among a hierarchy that viewed such spectacles as a covert challenge to Roman hegemony. Hilary's arrival in Rome barefooted for such an arduous journey would not have conjured images of the humble obedience to Rome that the *Vita* insinuates, but rather of a bishop whose ascetic accomplishments were calculated to imbue him with the credentials of a man to be reckoned with.

His motives for doing so are just as complicated as the actions that he undertook to effect them. That he traveled there, as some have suggested, in order to challenge the authority of Rome and further his plans for an autonomous Gallic ecclesiastical administration seems unlikely. If he were seeking autonomous power in Gaul and plotting to shake off the authority of Rome, he would have had little reason for making such a trip. It is far more plausible that Hilary journeyed to Rome to defend the decisions of the Gallic synod before a man whose support he cultivated and whose opinion he valued. ("With what zealous ardor he burned and with what celestial emulation, when the blessed man found out this news [i.e., of Chelidonius' appeal to Rome]").[55] This does not mean that Hilary subscribed to the same vision of the ecclesiastical hierarchy that Leo espoused, only that he

[54] *Vita Hilarii*, 22, eds. Cavallin, Jacob, *Honorat de Marseille*, *La Vie d'Hilaire d'Arles*, p. 138. '… non hiemis asperitatem, non Alpium stridores attenderit vel fragores, non vitrea glacialis crustae spicula protinus resolvenda, ⟨non⟩ desuper gladii ictui similes expaverit aculeos dependentes, [vi frigoris] terrore mortiferi geli concreto⟨s⟩ velut vibratam dexteram imitantes!' (The brackets in the English text indicate my rather free translation of the Latin.)

[55] Then Hilary took the trip to Rome in winter. *Vita Hilarii*, 22, *Honorat de Marseille*,

considered the Gallic churches to be part of that hierarchy in some more nuanced way. What he came to defend, in other words, was not only the actions of his local synod, but a way of understanding the relationship between Rome and the Gallic churches that ascribed to the latter a degree of autonomy that he intended for Rome to recognize as legitimate. More than anything else, the trip to Rome barefooted was designed to show that Hilary was powerful enough to undertake such an awesome responsibility.

Hilary craved the official recognition of the Gallic leadership at a time when their way of life was being threatened by the barbarian invasions. Gaul needed Rome in order to feel connected to the rest of Christendom.[56] But Gaul also needed Rome to acknowledge its competence to address the problems that troubled it. Van Dam has argued persuasively that the appearance of usurping emperors in the outlying regions of early fifth-century Gaul did not mean that Gallic society was either hostile or indifferent to Roman authority.[57] What people craved was order and structure amid the confusion and chaos caused by the retreat of the imperial administration and by the increasing presence of barbarian settlements.[58] Uprisings that were viewed by the Roman imperial administration as revolts were "attempts by local citizens to revive a Roman administration that was abandoning them."[59] In the light of this abandonment they came to understand themselves as capable of shaping their destiny in a way that sensitively acknowledged their

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La Vie d'Hilaire d'Arles, p. 138. 'Quod ubi comperit vir beatus, quanto studii ardore quantoque zelo superno fuerit inflammatus, …'

[56] Griffe, *La Gaule Chrétienne*, vol. 2, p. 170.

[57] R. van Dam, *Leadership and Community in Late Antique Gaul* (Berkeley, 1985), p. 53. For the view that the Gallic aristocracy, of which Hilary was a member, was more concerned with intra-Gallic politics than with its relationship to Rome, that Gaul with its rich intellectual tradition and history of political rebellion was operating as a semi-autonomous region, see R. Mathisen, "Hilarius, Germanus and Lupus: The Aristocratic Background of the Chelidonius Affair," *Phoenix* 33 (1979), p. 167. He sees Hilary's actions in Gaul "not as part of a uniform scheme to bring all ecclesiastical Gaul under a single authority, but rather as a struggle among local aristocrats for the control of an important see." He thus rejected Heinzelmann's argument that the controversy was shaped by the dissension between the Gallic and Italian aristocracies. See M. Heinzelmann, *Bischofsherrschaft in Gallien: Zur Kontinuität römischer Führungsschichten von 4. bis 7. Jahrhundert* (Munich, 1976); idem. "The 'affair' of Hilary of Arles (445) and Gallo-Roman Identity in the fifth-century," in eds. J. Drinkwater, H. Elton, *Fifth-century Gaul: A Crisis of Identity*? (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 239–251.

[58] Van Dam, *Leadership and Community*, p. 38.

[59] Ibid., p. 53.

dependence on the culture and institutions of Rome. The ardent praise for Rome expressed in the early fifth-century by the Gallic aristocrat, Rutilius Claudius Namatianus in his poem *De reditu suo* (c. 417), confirms that this confidence, which many shared, was especially present when Gaul was being threatened by barbarians: "Hear, most beautiful queen of a world that is yours, O Rome, admitted by the starry skies! … From diverse nations you have made one fatherland: the lawless profited beneath your sway; in sharing your laws with the vanquished, you have made a city from what was once the world. Thanks to you all the regions of the world have been united by the same bonds."[60] There is not the slightest hint that Hilary or anyone else among the ecclesiastical administration of Gaul attempted to sever the bonds between Rome and the provinces that Rutilius celebrated, only that Hilary interpreted those bonds as encompassing the exercise of ecclesiastical autonomy that was the expression of Gaul's continuing, if precarious, success.

The precise way in which Hilary intended that autonomy to be exercised can be gathered indirectly by reconstructing what may have transpired when he and Leo met in Rome. Almost nothing of the meeting is recorded by Leo, who accounted for his silence by claiming only that Hilary "switched over to utterances" too shocking to print. More can be learned from Hilary's *Vita*, where he is said to have requested from Leo "that the churches be governed according to the usual custom."[61] That custom was presumably the extensive jurisdictional privileges and rights of honor that Zosimus had assigned to Patroclus, the same arrangement that Leo said had been canceled. There would have been little reason for making such a statement if Hilary had not proposed a similar arrangement. Indirect evidence that Hilary did just that can also be adduced from his *Vita*, which depicts him as assuming the wide-ranging responsibilities of a papal representative.[62] When Hilary was celebrating the mysteries in church one day, the praetorian prefect of Gaul entered accompanied by his officials. Privately,

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[60] *De Reditu Suo*, I.47–48, 63–67. *The Home-Coming of Rutilius Claudius Namatianus from Rome to Gaul in the Year 416 A.D.*, ed. C.H. Keene (London, 1907). In this poem Namatianus describes vividly the deplorable conditions in Gaul and Italy, the desolation, broken bridges, and ruined roads that were the result of the Gothic invasions of the early fifth century. Ibid., p. 7. See also Griffe, *La Gaule Chrétienne*, vol. 2, p. 191. Heather, *The Fall of the Roman Empire*, pp. 233–235.

[61] *Vita Hilarii*, 22, eds. Cavallin, Jacob, *Honorat de Marseille*, *La Vie d'Hilaire d'Arles*, p. 138. '… ecclesiarum statum more solito ordinaret…'

[62] eds. Cavallin, Jacob, *Honorat de Marseille*, *La Vie d'Hilaire d'Arles*, p. 42.

Hilary had urged the prefect to administer the region justly. For failing to heed that advice, Hilary stopped preaching, chastised the prefect, and asked him to leave.[63] A similarly confrontational stance toward the imperial administration had been taken by Ambrose, the bishop of Milan, who had criticized the emperor Theodosius I for putting hundreds of innocent people to death. Like Ambrose, Hilary thought his role as bishop was to protect the people against the unjust application of the imperial laws.[64] By reprimanding the prefect, therefore, Hilary not only addressed the problem of injustice, he also facilitated the exercise of special authority that he thought his bishopric commanded with respect to the Roman secular administration in Gaul. The reason he could serve in that capacity was that he saw himself, and was seen by the prefect, as acting not in opposition to Rome, but in concert with it, as its representative.[65]

To understand how Leo likely interpreted Hilary's request "to govern the churches according to the usual custom" it is useful to consider further Zosimus' arrangement with Patroclus 26 years earlier, the details of which Leo would have unearthed simply by consulting the papal archives. "This privilege of granting credentials we have conferred upon our holy brother and co-bishop Patroclus in special recognition of his merit," said Zosimus.[66] It matters little for understanding how Leo understood a past that was mediated to him, at least partly, through the documents contained in the archives that the unstated reason for this arrangement was perhaps that Rome set out to restructure the churches of Gaul at a time of political instability. The words that Leo heard, and the memory they transmitted, was that Zosimus' arrangement with Patroclus was intended to recognize his excellent character. What counted as 'excellent character' in the eyes of the bishop of Rome was, generally speaking, narrowly circumscribed. It was the willingness to subscribe to catholic doctrine.

During the time of Zosimus, catholic doctrine had already taken a definitive stance against the teachings of Pelagius, who rejected the

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[63] *Vita Hilarii*, 13, Cavallin, Jacob, eds., *Honorat de Marseille*, *La Vie d'Hilaire d'Arles*, pp. 118, 120.

[64] eds. Cavallin, Jacob, *Honorat de Marseille*, *La Vie d'Hilaire d'Arles*, p. 44.

[65] Ibid., p. 42.

[66] Zosimus, 22 March 417, Jaffé 328. 'Placuit apostolicae' was addressed to the bishops throughout Gaul and the seven provinces. 'Hoc autem privilegium formatarum sancto Patroclo fratri et coepiscopo nostro meritorum eius specialiter contemplatione concessimus.' Cited by Griffe, *La Gaule Chrétienne*, vol. 2, p. 147.

Augustinian doctrine of original sin and divine grace in subscribing to the view that human beings, by cultivating their personal merit, had the power to secure their own salvation.[67] In southern Gaul, such ideas seemed especially appealing at a time when the Gallic aristocracy and ecclesiastical apparatus could do little more than succumb to the Visigoths settled by the imperial administration on their land and flee from the invading Vandals. As the *Carmen de Providentia*, a Gallic poem composed in the early fifth century (c. 416), remarked:

> If any strength of spirit remains for us, let us shake off the servile yoke of sin, and with our fetters broken, let us return to the honor and liberty of the homeland. We will not be prevented by impious pacts with a cruel tyrant, though written with a captive hand; this treaty is annulled by Christ, who has every right to cancel it by calling back those who have turned away and receiving those who have turned to him. An extravagant buyer, Christ purchased them with his own blood; as long as the hastening will ('festina voluntas') anticipates the solace of its deliverer, the Lord will be moved by the sincere weeping [of repentance].[68]

In the context of suffering and chaos, this poem called for spiritual action and courage, as if embracing an Old Testament theology of justice, in which moral reform was visibly rewarded, might undo wrongs that the barbarians had committed.[69] Though its confidence in the resilience of the human spirit, which was amplified in such authors as Vincent of Lerins, John Cassian, and Salvian of Marseille, fell short of openly embracing Pelagianism, the sentiment that it expressed was close enough to the heresy to make its attribution to Prosper of Aquitaine unlikely.[70] This flurry of ideas that was being expressed prompted Valentinian III in 425 to order the prefect of Gaul, Amatius, to expel

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[67] Zosimus, at first, supported Caelestius and Pelagius. But we learn from Prosper in his entry for the year 418 that Zosimus confirmed the decision of the Council of Carthage condemning the Pelagians. Prosper, *Epit. Chron.*, a. 418, 1266.

[68] *Carmen de Providentia*, vv. 941–950 (*PL* 51, 638); M.P. McHugh, *The Carmen de Providentia Dei Attributed to Prosper of Aquitaine: A Revised Text with an Introduction, Translation, and Notes* (Washington, D.C. 1964), pp. 306–307; see also Griffe, *La Gaule Chrétienne*, vol. 3, p. 355. The poem expressed the idea that Christians should be grateful for being chastised by God because it prevented them from continuing, uncorrected, along the path of injustice. The same material and physical punishments were thought to serve different purposes for the just and unjust: the unjust were tormented, while the just became more holy. *Carmen de Providentia*, vv. 885–896.

[69] On moral reform in the poem, see Heather, *The Fall of the Roman Empire*, p. 235. See also M. Roberts, "Barbarians in Gaul: the response of the poets," in eds. J. Drinkwater, H. Elton, *Fifth-Century Gaul: A Crisis of Identity* (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 101–102.

[70] Ibid., p. 102.

any Pelagian bishops who had failed to repudiate their views before Patroclus within twenty days of the imperial decree.[71] The emperor would not have issued such a decree without the guidance of Zosimus, who surely saw in Patroclus a willing ally against the Pelagian-sympathizing bishops and monks who were taking root in Gaul. For this loyalty to catholic doctrine, which Zosimus had foreseen, he recognized Patroclus' 'excellent character' with the special appointment in southern Gaul.

Leo saw no such ally in Hilary. I have already remarked that Hilary's trip to Rome barefooted would have conjured images of the ardent asceticism that the Romans found so appalling. Once he was there he did little to ameliorate Leo's fears. During the proceedings Leo complained that Hilary displayed his "pride of the mind ('mentis tumor')" and responded with rash and "insolent retorts ('sermones insolentes')."[72] In describing the fast and furious consecrations that he made throughout the provinces, Leo envisioned a reckless and inattentive man who "did not dispense the healthful [benefits] of pastoral care, but inflicted the violence of a robber and a thief."[73] For all these reasons he was construed as being as far from possessing an excellent character as possible while remaining in communion with Rome.

Even Hilary's own *Vita* portrayed his demeanor as ill-suited to the sensibilities of the apostolic see. Auxiliaris, the former prefect of Gaul who, at that time, was serving as the prefect of Italy or Rome, had this advice to give to Hilary: "I myself do not recall even the slightest deed of your Blessedness having been sullied by the taint of arrogance. But men are intolerant if we speak as we do when conscious of our own wrongdoing. Furthermore, the ears of the Romans are more drawn to tenderness. If your holiness submits immediately, you'll gain much and lose nothing. Do this for me, and dissipate these trifling clouds with the clear sky [borne] of a minor change."[74] Auxiliaris' remark that Hilary was not arrogant, and his subsequent advice to be humble, makes sense

[71] Griffe, *La Gaule Chrétienne*, vol. 2, p. 174, n. 10.

[72] Leo, *Ep.* 10.3, Jaffé 407.

[73] Ibid., 10. 5. '… nec salubritatem impendere diligentiae pastoralis, sed vim inferre latronis et furis…'

[74] *Vita Hilarii*, 22, eds. Cavallin, Jacob, *Honorat de Marseille, La Vie d'Hilaire d'Arles*, p. 142. '… ego nec minimum quidem factum beatitudinis tuae arrogantiae memini contagione fuscari. Sed impatienter ferunt homines, si sic loquamur, quomodo nobis conscii sumus. Aures praeterea Romanorum quadam teneritudine plus trahuntur, in qua si se sanctitas tua subinde demittat, plurimum tu, nihil perditurus, adquires. Da mihi hoc, et exiguas nubes parvae mutationis serenitate compesce.'

only if his purpose was to respond to Leo's having said that Hilary was an arrogant man.[75] But arrogance was not only a personal failing of character that Leo would have found distasteful in someone who had come to present his case before the apostolic see. It was also a quality of mind that he would have associated with the teaching of Pelagius, who believed that salvation could be achieved solely through one's individual efforts.[76] Because it magnified personal autonomy, while diminishing the role of grace, it was thought improperly to elevate human beings beyond what they were capable of accomplishing on their own. If Hilary subscribed to views that were even remotely connected with Pelagianism, then Leo would have considered him presumptuous, his theological outlook and style of thinking unacceptable in someone who wished to assume broad responsibilities for the ecclesiastical administration of southern Gaul.

To reconstruct Hilary's theological views it is useful to examine the only work of his that has survived, his *Vita Honorati*, a well-crafted, carefully stylized biography of his relative, mentor, and founder of the monastery at Lerins, Honoratus. Rhetorically sophisticated, the *Vita* followed the guidelines of the rhetoric that had been taught in the handbooks and which Hilary adapted to celebrate the virtues of his mentor. In imagining what transpired when Hilary visited Rome, the *Vita* is especially useful for the light it sheds on his variety of ascetic spirituality, which incorporated an idiosyncratic view of grace ('gratia') that would have made Leo pause. Given the rhetorical ambitions of the *Vita*, it should not be surprising to learn that a refined ascetic practice was all that Hilary thought was needed to bring about human perfection.[77]

More surprising is his striking view of grace. Not only did it consist in the spiritual gifts that resided in the individual and facilitated ascetic practice,[78] but it was also thought to arise from the quality of the human interactions that governed monastic life. Because of the harmo-

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[75] It did not help matters that Hilary, when rebuffed by Leo, became confrontational and departed from the hearing before it concluded.

[76] Leo considered the Pelagians to be arrogant ('superbi') because they believed that perfection was attainable for human beings without the aid of divine grace. *Ep.* 1, 442 (?), *Relatione sancti*, Jaffé 398.

[77] *Vita Honorati*, 7.24–29; 9.17–19, ed. M.-D. Valentin, *Hilaire d'Arles, Vie de Saint Honorat*, *SC* 235 (Paris, 1977), pp. 86, 92.

[78] *Vita Honorati*, 33.2, Ibid., p. 161: 'mentis gratia pullulabat.' "Grace flourishes in the soul [of Honoratus]," he exclaimed.

nious relationship between Honoratus and his community, because of the prayers that he offered, "the grace of the Holy Spirit was diffused throughout the monastery," Hilary said.[79] Its presence was peculiarly dependent upon human relationships, and more specifically upon the sort of monastic leadership that Honoratus exercised, who made grace appear in the community through his abundant charismatic gifts. And because his leadership was steeped in grace, he was in that capacity compared to Christ in *his* capacity as the head of the church, a spiritual leader whose diversity of gifts, especially his 'humilitas' and 'caritas', was reflected in the diversity of his monastic community.[80] Even allowing for the fact that Hilary exaggerated his praise of Honoratus to accommodate the genre of rhetoric that he adapted to the *Vita* in order to further his own rhetorical claims for power and legitimacy, the view of grace was sufficiently un-Roman to have made Leo wary. Grace, so far as Rome was concerned, was a gift from God that directed the human will onto its path toward loving God. It certainly could not be altered or enhanced by the quality of one's human interactions, or even by the practice of such noble virtues as charity and humility.

Hilary's view of grace, his emphasis on accumulating personal merit and conquering imperfection, reflected the spirituality of the monks of Lerins, which was rhetorically infused with their so-called zeal for the more rigorous asceticism of the desert. "[Honoratus], burning with love for the solitary life ('heremi amore flagrabant'), despised human favor and the human way of living."[81] That "love for the solitary life" was well-grounded in the literary *topoi* of the desert spirituality of monks who were steeped in the writings of the Greek theologians, including Athanasius (d. 373), whose *Vita Antonii* circulated throughout Gaul in the Latin translation by Evagrius of Antioch.[82] Hilary himself probably knew the *Ascetica* of Basil of Caesarea, the *Pedagogue* and *Protreptica* of Clement of Alexandria, (d. c. 211–216) and the *De virginitate* by Gregory of Nyssa, in addition to such Latin writers as Cyprian (d. 258), Paulinus of Nola (d. 431), the *Vita Martini* and other works by Sulpitius Severus (d. c. 420–425), and, of course, the *de laude Eremi* of Eucherius (d. c. 449), which was dedicated to him. From it he learned the impor-

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[79] *Vita Honorati*, 19.3, Ibid., p. 124. 'diffusa in monasterio suo Sancti Spiritus gratia.'

[80] I do not mean to suggest the presence of intra-community quarrels about grace, but only that Leo would have been wary of such statements. A so-called 'semi-Pelagian' controversy did not, as such, exist. See Leyser, "'This Sainted Isle'," pp. 192–194.

[81] *Vita Honorati*, 10.3, Ibid., p. 96.

[82] See Jerome, *De viris illustribus* 125.

tance of being detached from one's parents, the respect for elders, and the necessity of adopting *apatheia* as the state of mind appropriate to ascetic discipline.[83] This way of construing ascetic piety was very different from the staid view of asceticism that was considered acceptable to Rome, which had always been wary of the more ostentatious forms for which the East was famous.[84] Caelestine had specifically condemned the monks of Lerins whose devout spirituality had led them to refuse penitence to the laity.[85] Ascetic performance was to be tempered by the implicit constraints of the modified-Augustinian understanding of grace. Too much emphasis on the cultivation of virtue and merit implied that the monks had descended into the Pelagian view that human beings were innately capable of effecting their own salvation. That is not to say that Hilary was a Pelagian, or that Pelagian views continued, after Valentinian condemned them in the 420's, to dominate the mentality of fifth-century Gaul. It suggests merely that Leo may have been wary of the image of asceticism that Hilary championed and the view of grace that his *Vita Honorati* espoused.[86] That intuition is confirmed by Prosper, who told Augustine that Hilary, though he generally followed his teachings, was among those who challenged his doctrine of grace.[87] Because Leo worked closely with Prosper, he surely would have been aware of this sentiment.

It is, therefore, to be expected that Hilary's biographer, Honoratus of Marseille, was sensitive to the charge that Hilary subscribed to Pelagian-like views. His *Vita Hilarii*, composed between 475–480, did everything possible to rebut such a charge by correcting any lingering concern that Hilary's style of ascetic piety and his view of divine grace tarnished his orthodoxy.[88] In it he was made to subscribe to the

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[83] Ibid., pp. 27, 28, 37.

[84] For that reason there was some skepticism of asceticism in the West. See J.F. Kelly, "The Gallic Resistance to Eastern Asceticism," *SP* 17 (1982), pp. 506–510.

[85] Caelestine, 26 July 429, *Cuperemus quidem*, Jaffé 369.

[86] In the fifth century only three Gauls were ever accused of Pelagianism: Sulpitius Severus, Leporius, and Lucidus. See Mathisen, *Ecclesiastical Factionalism*, p. 40. Although there is no doubt that Pelagius was considered a heretic in Gaul, the eastern theology that had been imbibed at least partly through the transmission of eastern asceticism would have made Pelagius's teaching seem somehow less objectionable. Pelagianism was viewed as enough of a problem there that Valentinian threatened to banish Gallic bishops who subscribed to its teachings. D. O'Keeffe, "The *Via Media* of Monastic Theology. The Debate on Grace and Free Will in Fifth-Century Southern Gaul," *Downside Review* 113 (1995), p. 162.

[87] Prosper, *Epistula ad Augustinum*, PL 33, 1006–1007.

[88] eds. Cavallin, Jacob, *Honorat de Marseille, La Vie d'Hilaire d'Arles*, pp. 38, 41–42.

moderate-Augustinian view that grace was the divine help that allowed him to perceive the virtues of his soul, and that infused all aspects of his ministry.[89] It improved the ordinary capacity of human beings to make effective judgments, including the capacity to respond to the needs of the poor and of the monks by making charitable gifts.[90] Hilary's air of serenity, his steadfast spirit ('animus securus'), and his modest way of speaking were reputed to attest to the divine grace residing in him and to be seen visibly etched on his countenance.[91] Although this image of grace as suffusing all aspects of human virtue departed from the strict-Augustinian view that grace mainly guided the direction of the will, it was, nonetheless, congenial to Rome for acknowledging that grace, and not human effort alone, enabled people to excel in virtue. Because grace thus construed was not simply a reward for human achievement, Hilary's biographer implied that it arose neither from the quality of human relationships, nor from the apparent rigors of ascetic perfection.

The *Vita* was completed during a time when the monks of Lerins were being accused indirectly of subscribing to Pelagianism.[92] A priest from the diocese of Riez named Lucidus had become a vocal proponent of a strict-Augustinian interpretation of grace and predestination, a view that he opposed to the Pelagian-like teachings of the Lerinien monks. His adversary was a man named Faustus of Riez, a bishop and former monk from Lerins who, in defending the monks against the charge of Pelagianism, rhetorically opposed the errors of Pelagius to those of Augustine in order to carve out a moderate-Augustinian view.[93] With this debate in mind, Honoratus of Marseille portrayed Hilary as a moderate Augustinian in order to defend him posthumously against such a charge.

Leo's current circle of friends, and his connection to the past, put him in contact with people, both living and dead, who were deeply committed to eliminating Pelagianism. Caelestine, for whom Leo served as archdeacon, was remembered by Prosper in his *Chronicle* in the year 429 for having rooted out Pelagians from the churches of

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[89] *Vita Hilarii*, 31.27, 17.15, eds. Cavallin, Jacob, *Honorat de Marseille, La Vie d'Hilaire d'Arles*.

[90] Ibid., p. 7.

[91] Ibid.

[92] Ibid., p. 42.

[93] R.W. Mathisen, "For specialists only: the reception of Augustine and his teachings in fifth-century Gaul," in *Augustine* (New York, 1993), p. 32.

Britain, an entry that Leo surely read. From it we learn that a Pelagian named Agricola, who was the son of the Pelagian bishop Severianus, was said to have introduced the teaching into the British churches, where Caelestine sent Germanus, the bishop of Auxerre, to represent Rome in removing the heretics and restoring catholic doctrine there.[94] (This sober opponent of Pelagianism and representative of the apostolic see was the same Germanus who was a friend and colleague of Hilary.) One year earlier (July 428), Caelestine had taken to task the bishops of Vienne and Narbonennsis, former monks of Lerins, for permitting their clergy to wear monastic clothing, especially the pallium and belt that was the custom for the lerinian monks. "Why do you change," he asked, "in the Gallic churches the custom of dressing [that was followed] for such a long time and by so many bishops? We must distinguish ourselves from the congregations and others by doctrine, not clothing; by conduct, not dress; by purity of spirit, not cultic practice. For if we begin to love novelty then we shall trample upon the rules handed down to us by the fathers to such an extent that we shall welcome vain superstitions."[95] By consulting the papal archives, therefore, Leo would have concluded not only that monks' clothing was meant to be worn only in the monastery, but that monastic spirituality was inimical to the austere orientation of the Gallic churches, the doctrinal commitments of which were to be communicated by priests whose conduct was beyond reproach. Ostentatious displays of cultic practice were viewed paradoxically as detracting from, rather than solidifying, the moral authority of the clergy, who were to distinguish themselves from the ideas and practices of the monastic establishment.

Such prominent intellectuals as Vincent of Lerins (in 434) (d. c. 445) and John Cassian (before 430) continued to explore the appeal of Pelagian-like ideas against the views of Prosper and Augustine in order to respond to the extreme variety of Augustinianism being circulated in Gaul that was simply too restrictive for the monastic sensibility.[96] It is

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[94] Prosper, *Epit. Chron.*, a. 429, 1301.

[95] Caelestine, 26 July 428, Jaffé 369: 'Unde hic habitus in ecclesiis Gallicanis, ut tot annorum, tantorumque pontificum in alterum habitum consuetudo vertatur? Discernendi a plebe vel caeteris sumus doctrina, non veste; conversatione, non habitu; mentis puritate, non cultu. Nam si studere incipiamus novitati, traditum nobis a patribus ordinem calcabimus, ut locum supervacuis superstitionibus faciamus.' See Griffe, *La Gaule Chrétienne*, vol. 2, p. 177.

[96] Augustine, in his *De dono perseverantiae*, made predestination the touchstone of orthodoxy, a position that would have been perceived as radical among the monks of Gaul. O'Keeffe, "The *Via Media* of Monastic Theology. The Debate on Grace and Free

worth rehearsing this ongoing conversation of the Pelagian controversy by examining its persistent use of words and phrases, through which the more perplexing philosophical issues were explored. Vincent of Lerins was probably thinking of Augustine and his followers when he wrote (in the *Commonitorium* of 434, approximately four years after the death of Augustine) that the heretics [i.e., the Augustinians] "dare to promise and teach that in his church … there is a certain great and particular and quite personal grace of God, so that without any labor, without any effort, without any diligence, even if they neither ask, nor seek, nor knock, whoever is among their followers has such a divine dispensation that, having been lifted up by angelic hands, that is, guarded by the protection of angels, they are never able to strike their feet against a stone, that is, they are never able to stumble."[97] And Prosper was probably thinking of Vincent, John Cassian, and those like him when he informed Augustine that the clergy complain that "all diligence ('industria') is taken away … And when we present the writings of your blessedness [i.e., Augustine] against them, which are informed by the most efficacious and countless testimonies from the divine Scriptures, … they defend their obstinacy by appealing to antiquity."[98] Vincent was to use similar words and phrases in describing the method of argumentation used by the Augustinians, "the heretics" whom he took to task for making the effort and industry ('studium et industria') of individuals irrelevant to their salvation, and for producing "a thousand testimonies, a thousand examples, a thousand authorities

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Will in Fifth-Century Southern Gaul," p. 66. On Cassian and the shape of asceticism in Gaul, see C. Leyser, *Authority and Asceticism from Augustine to Gregory the Great* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 39–47.

[97] Vincent of Lerins, *Commonitorium Pro Catholicae Fidei Antiquitate et Universitate Adversus Profana Omnium Haereticorum Novitates*, 26 (37), ed. A. Jülicher, (Tübingen, 1925). 'Audent enim polliceri et docere, quod in ecclesia sua … magna et specialis ac plane personalis quaedam sit Dei gratia, adeo ut sine ullo labore, sine ullo studio, sine ulla industria, etiamsi nec petant, nec quaerant, nec pulsent, quicunque illi ad numerum suum pertinent, tamen ita divinitus dispensentur, ut, angelicis evecti manibus, id est, angelica protectione servati, nunquam possint offendere ad lapidem pedem suum, id est, nunquam scandalizari.'

[98] Augustine, *Ep.* 225.3. '… removeri omnem industriam … Et cum contra eos scripta Beatitudinis tuae validissimis et innumeris testimoniis divinarum scripturarum instructa proferimus, … obstinationem suam vetustate defendunt.' And in the same letter, ibid., 225.2, Prosper wrote that the monks thought that Augustine's teachings were contrary to the views of the fathers and of the church. The controversy deepened probably as a result of Augustine's *De correptione et gratia* being introduced into Gaul in 427.

from the Law, the Psalms, the apostles, the Prophets" to support their theological views.[99] Augustine's reply to Prosper can be found in his *De Dono Perseverantiae*, where he confirmed that the "asking, seeking, and knocking" that was thought to be the individual effort of those striving for salvation proceeded from divine grace, and not from personal merit. "Let them consider, therefore, how wrong they are who think that when we ask, seek, and knock ('petamus, quaeramus, pulsemus') it is from us, and not given to us. 'It is the case,' they say, 'that grace is preceded by our merit, so that it [i.e., grace] follows justly when we ask and receive, when we seek and find, and when it is opened to we who knock.'"[100] The "asking, seeking, and knocking" was not the precondition for receiving grace, but rather the manifestation of divine grace in the lives of individuals.

Although John Cassian never alluded to Augustine as a heretic,[101] the thoroughness with which he developed the monastic way of life and the vivid manner in which he promoted it, left some, including Prosper, with the impression that he was congenial to Pelagian-like views.[102] Human effort and divine grace were mutually reinforcing principles, the one being insufficient without the other: "So the grace of God always cooperates with our will in good measure, and in everything assists, protects, and defends it, so that sometimes [the grace of God] even requires and looks for some efforts of good will from it that [He] may not seem to confer [His] gifts on one who is sleeping deeply or who is relaxed in idle rest."[103] The extreme Augustinian view of grace that the *De dono perseverantiae* expressed was simply incompatible with Cassian's purpose in promoting for a Western audience the feats of asceticism that he had witnessed during his seven-year stay among the monks and hermits of Egypt. Unlike Vincent, though, he did not

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[99] Vincent of Lerins, *Commonitorium, etc.*, 26 (37).

[100] Augustine, *De Dono Perseverantiae*, 23/64; M.A. Lesousky, *The De Dono Perseverantiae of Saint Augustine, A Translation with an Introduction and a Commentary* (Washington, D.C., 1956). For Augustine, the desire to pray, i.e., the "asking, seeking, and knocking", was a divine gift.

[101] John Cassian, *De Incarn.Chr.*, 7.27.

[102] See e.g. Prosper of Aquitaine, *De gratia Dei et libero arbitrio liber contra Collatorem*, where he refutes John Cassian's *Conlatio* 13, *De protectione Dei*. Cassian's *Conlationes* were read at Lerins, having been dedicated to Honoratus and Eucherius, and at least the second part (11–17) was in circulation in 426. O'Keeffe, "The *Via Media* of Monastic Theology. The Debate on Grace and Free Will in Fifth-Century Southern Gaul," p. 165.

[103] John Cassian, *Conlationes*, 13.13.

openly embrace Pelagianism. During the Nestorian controversy (430), in fact, he saw an opportunity to take a public stance against it when Leo commissioned him to write a treatise against Nestorius. The *De Incarnatione* was the result, a work that saw in the heresy of Nestorius a parallel to the teachings of Pelagius. Both men, Cassian thought, made Christ into a common man whose individual virtue merited his human flesh being so loosely connected with the divine that two Christs resulted. That this work had been commissioned and sanctioned by the apostolic see confirmed, as he wished it to confirm, his zealous commitment to the fight against Pelagianism.

Prosper was sufficiently troubled by the ease with which these sorts of Pelagian ideas were taking root among the Gallic clergy that he, accompanied by a man named Hilary (who is not to be confused with Hilary, the bishop of Arles), traveled to Rome (around 430/1) to voice his concerns to Caelestine. Certain bishops and clergy of southern Gaul, in disregard of the memory of Augustine, were conspiring to spread Pelagianism, he said. Caelestine addressed those bishops in a letter urging them to act as guardians of the catholic faith by "rebuking such people and restraining their freedom to preach." Of their criticism of Augustine, Caelestine wrote: "We have always held communion with Augustine of blessed memory for his life and merits, nor has even the rumor of dark suspicion ever touched him; we remember that his wisdom was so great that my predecessors, even before now, always ranked him among the best teachers."[104] John Cassian, whom Leo commissioned, Prosper, who served as Leo's secretary, and Caelestine, whom Leo served as archdeacon, were deeply engaged in fighting against Pelagian sympathizers in Gaul.[105] With that circle of friends to guide him, there is no reason to doubt that Leo perceived Hilary's ties to the lerinian monks and his establishment of monastic practices, such as reading spiritual books at meal time and dining in seclusion, as threatening to catholic views. This is all the more true given the

[104] Caelestine, 15 May 431, *Apostolici verba*, Jaffé 381. 'Dilectissimis fratribus Venerio, Marino, Leontio, Auxonio, Arcadio, Fillucio et ceteris Galliarum episcopis'. 'Augustinam sanctae recordationis virum pro vita sua atque meritis in nostra communione semper habuimus, nec umquam hunc sinistrae suspicionis saltem rumor aspersit: quem tantae scientiae olim fuisse meminimus, ut inter magistros optimos etiam ante a meis semper decessoribus haberetur.'

[105] Valentinian's decree in 425 to remove the Pelagian bishops from Gaul had resulted in only limited success.

fact that Hilary had assigned to himself the same broad jurisdictional privileges that Patroclus had enjoyed under Zosimus.[106]

There were well-articulated reasons for Rome to be suspicious when bishops interfered in the administration of dioceses beyond their jurisdiction by removing some bishops and ordaining others. Traditionally such actions had been associated with causing disruption in the churches. Canon fifteen of the Council of Nicaea forbade members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy from moving from city to city. The precedent for this ruling was the synod held at Jerusalem,[107] which prohibited bishops from translating their sees, presumably for material gain.[108] The first canon of the Council of Sardica observed, disapprovingly, that no bishop had yet been found who wished to be transferred from a large city to a smaller one.[109] Early in his papacy, Leo reprimanded the bishop of Aquileia, in whose diocese priests, deacons, and clergy had left their churches and wandered "from the foundation of the apostles ('fundamentum apostolicum')" and into the teachings of Pelagius.[110] Leo associated such wandering with the spread of doctrinal views that were contrary to Rome.

While everything in Leo's background would have alerted him to the dangers of Hilary's variety of asceticism, he did not wield sufficient authority in Gaul to denounce it openly. He may have perceived that an outright condemnation of Hilary as a semi-Pelagian would only drive a wedge between Rome and the Gallic churches, many of which likely found solace in the certainty of labor and works. To curtail Hilary's influence in the region he devised other methods, such as the papal decretal limiting his jurisdiction that we have already seen. To enforce this decretal Leo asked for the secular imperial authority to intervene by securing a rescript from Valentinian (the second in as many years). Addressed to the general Aetius (who had been the secular support behind Hilary and his party),[111] the rescript stated that Hilary had violated "the majesty of the imperial government and the

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[106] *Vita Hilarii*, 15, eds. Cavallin, Jacob, *Honorat de Marseille, La Vie d'Hilaire d'Arles*. Griffe, *La Gaule Chrétienne*, vol. 2, p. 248.

[107] Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, 6.11.

[108] W. Bright, *The Canons of the First Four General Councils* (Oxford, 1892), p. 57.

[109] Ibid.

[110] Leo, *Ep.* 1.1, Jaffé 398.

[111] as Mathisen suggested, *Ecclesiastical Factionalism*, pp. 155–156; regarding the rescript of Valentinian, see ibid., pp. 165–166. *Novella Valentiniani* 17, 8 July 445, 'De episcoporum ordinatione'.

rights of the apostolic see" when he, "with the lone recklessness of a usurper, [improperly] seized for himself the [right to ordain] bishops. He removed some beyond his competence, others he ordained inappropriately, against the wishes and over the objections of the citizens. Since they [i.e., the bishops] were not readily received by those who did not choose them, he assembled an armed band for himself."[112] Addressing the rescript to Aetius was a not-so-subtle warning to the general that the emperor supported Rome. Promulgating the rescript in the first place was a warning to the ecclesiastical officials of Gaul that the imperial authority was willing to defend with force the primacy of the apostolic see: "[W]hoever among the bishops fails to come when he is summoned to a trial before the bishop of Rome shall be forced by the governor of his province to appear."[113] That the authority of the apostolic see needed to be defended suggests that appealing to Rome was insufficient to limit Hilary's actions, a conclusion that his Gallic supporters and opponents likely reached as well. Given the strong language used in the rescript, there is little reason to doubt that the emperor himself anticipated the charge. That is why he insisted that the document merely voiced his approval and was unnecessary to validate the sentence of the apostolic see. By that statement, the emperor bolstered the authority of a Rome that ostensibly did not need him, even while he unwittingly revealed that authority to be fragile.

The authority of Rome was not so fragile that Hilary did not consider himself bound, on some level, to acknowledge it. Gaul needed Rome just as much as Rome needed Gaul. Shortly after Leo pronounced the sentence against him, just how much Gaul needed Rome was made clear by the fact that Hilary sent two embassies there to assuage the situation. We learn from his *Vita* that the priest Ravennius from Arles, who was soon followed by bishops Nectarius of Avignon and Constantius of Uzès, was sent in a spirit of humility "to appease then the mind" of Leo.[114] While nothing is known of Ravennius' mission, we know that Nectarius and Constantius met with the former

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[112] *Novella Valentiniani* 17: '… indebitas sibi ordinationes episcoporum sola temeritate usurpantis invasit. Nam alios incompetenter removit, indecenter alios invitis et repugnantibus civibus ordinavit. Qui quoniam non facile ab his, qui non elegerant, recipiebantur, manum sibi contrahebat armatam…'

[113] Ibid. '… quisquis episcoporum ad iudicium Romani antistitis evocatus venire neglexerit, per moderatorem eiusdem provinciae adesse cogatur…'

[114] 'ad placandum tunc animum sancti Leonis', *Vita Hilarii*, 22, eds. Cavallin, Jacob, *Honorat de Marseille, La Vie d'Hilaire d'Arles*, p. 140.

prefect of Gaul, Auxiliaris, a supporter of Hilary whose letter to him is preserved in the *Vita*. "I have received with deserving admiration the holy bishops Nectarius and Constantius who come on behalf of your blessedness," he said, "With them I have spoken often of the virtue and constancy of [your] spirit and of [your] contempt for human affairs." Auxiliaris also met with Leo: "I have spoken likewise with the holy pope Leo. Here, I believe, you shudder somewhat in your spirit."[115] The discord between Hilary and Leo had reached such a fevered pitch that Hilary recoiled merely to think of him. Theirs was a clash of personalities that left both parties angry and bitter, Hilary feeling misunderstood and Leo disrespected. There was never any question, however, that Hilary, and the Gallic churches that he represented, longed to be understood by Leo, just as much as Leo longed to be respected.

If anything transpired between them after these events, no record of it remains. Hilary quietly returned to his see, where, as far as we know, he neither held synods nor made ordinations. In place of Hilary, Leontius, a senior bishop in the region of Viennensis, was granted the authority by the apostolic see to convene synods outside of his province and to act as a metropolitan bishop.[116] "[W]e want our brother and fellow bishop, the worthy Bishop Leontius, to be honored with the following dignity, if this pleases you: your Holinesses [i.e., the bishops of Vienne] are not to convoke a council in another province without his consent."[117] That Leontius (the man whom Caelestine addressed in his letter to the bishops of Gaul in 431?) was given the same extensive privileges that Leo found so appalling in Hilary indicates just how personal the controversy with Hilary really was. Leo simply despised him for holding views and implementing practices that highlighted

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[115] 'Sanctos Nectarium et Constantium sacerdotes, de beatitudinis tuae parte venientes, digna admiratione suscepi. Cum his saepius sum locutus de virtute animi atque constantia contemptuque rerum humanarum… Locutus sum etiam cum sancto papa Leone. Hoc loco, credo, aliquantum animo perhorrescis;' *Vita Hilarii*, 22, eds. Cavallin, Jacob, *Honorat de Marseille, La Vie d'Hilaire d'Arles*, p. 140.

[116] This might be the same Leontius whom Caelestine addressed in *Apostolici verba*, Jaffé 381, as Mathisen observed, identifying him as possibly the bishop of Trois Chateaux; see *Ecclesiastical Factionalism*, p. 164. Griffe thinks that he was the bishop Leontius of Fréjus, *La Gaule Chrétienne*, vol. 2, p. 174.

[117] Leo, *Ep.* 10.9, Jaffé 407. '… fratrem et coepiscopum nostrum Leontium probabilem sacerdotem, hac, si vobis placet, dignitate volumus decorari: ut praeter eius consensum alterius provinciae non indicatur a vestra sanctitate concilium…' Leo made clear to the bishops of Vienne that he did not wish to assume for himself, "as Hilary might claim," the responsiblity for making ordinations in the province.

the relative autonomy of the Gallic churches. While that autonomy no doubt persisted, the fiction that the apostolic see exercised a kind of hegemony in the region was something that both sides generally maintained. For all these reasons Hilary died on 5 May 449 without ever having reconciled with Leo.

What transpired after Hilary died illustrates that Leo was committed to containing the exercise of local power in the region. Because he had learned from Hilary that power wielded by a self-serving individual could be dangerous and unruly, he thought it needed to be circumscribed through the just administration of the ecclesiastical law by someone modest enough to acknowledge that law.[118] This task fell to Ravennius, the same priest whom Hilary sent to Rome to represent him, having been chosen unanimously a few years later to serve as the new bishop of Arles.[119] Apart from this diplomatic mission to Rome, nothing is known of Ravennius prior to his election.[120] But from Leo's endorsement of the bishop it is reasonable to assume that he had met him in Rome and liked him: "We ratify with our approval the good work done by your Brotherhood … in the city of Arles," he said.[121] That the clergy and people of Arles had selected a man whom Rome found acceptable indicates that they were eager to repair their relationship with Rome after the situation with Hilary. Insofar as Ravennius had never joined the monastery at Lerins, he probably subscribed to a view of grace and ascetic discipline that was congenial to Rome. That is why Leo did not hesitate to bestow informally upon him the responsibilities of a papal delegate by entrusting him with the confidence ('fiducia') of Rome: "As the devout follower and careful administrator [of the canons], you will undoubtedly glory in the fellowship of those who have deserved to hear about the increase of the talents entrusted to them […] So that you should not hesitate to have confidence in our love for you, keep us informed often about the course of your actions, since we, mindful of our judgment, want always to rejoice in the Lord in your progress."[122] This sort of informal arrangement was not unique

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118 Leo, *Ep.* 41, 22 August 449, *Provectionem dilectionis*, Jaffé 435.

119 Leo, *Ep.* 40, 22 August 449, *Justa et rationabilis*, Jaffé 434.

120 After his election, Ravennius settled a dispute between Theodore, the bishop of Fréjus, and Faustus, the abbey of the monastery of Lerins. We have Ravennius' letter dated 30 December 452. Griffe, *La Gaule Chrétienne*, vol. 2, pp. 145–146.

121 Leo, *Ep.* 40, Jaffé 434. '… in Arelatensium civitate … bonum fraternitatis vestrae opus nostro judicio roboramus.'

122 Leo, *Ep.* 41, Jaffé 435. '… Quarum devotus sectator et diligens exsecutor in

to southern Gaul. Leo was in the process of devising a similarly beneficial relationship with selected representatives of the eastern churches, whom he urged to write frequently and informatively to Rome.

In his new capacity as a papal delegate, Ravennius' first assignment was to remove from communion with the churches of Gaul a vagabond named Petronianus, who had falsely claimed to be Leo's deacon and to represent the interests of Rome.[123] Less than one year later (5 May 450), Leo sent two of his representatives to Arles, Petronius the priest and Regulus the deacon, in order to discuss with Ravennius the *Tome* he had sent to Flavian, as well as Cyril of Alexandria's second letter to Nestorius. Ravennius was to publicize both documents throughout the churches of Gaul.[124] "Dearly beloved brother, you have an excellent opportunity to commend the start of your episcopacy to all the churches and to our God if you carry out this task as we have entrusted and committed it to you," Leo said.[125] Ravennius was also charged with informing the Gallic churches of the correct date for celebrating Easter,[126] establishing a uniform practice for which made the Gallic churches feel that much more connected to Rome. This was the model of local leadership that Leo had in mind, in which bishops who dutifully performed the various tasks that were assigned to them exercised their autonomy locally only to the extent that the central ecclesiastical laws permitted. As far as we know, Leo had never trusted Hilary to perform such functions because he had implicitly operated according to the opposing model that envisioned local laws being administered by local bishops. This more autonomous model of ecclesiastical leadership was especially threatening when it was implemented by a bishop whose doctrinal views Leo considered dubious.

The subtleties of the relationship between Gaul and Rome were not lost on the colleagues of Ravennius. Well aware of his status with the

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eorum procul dubio consortio gloriaberis, qui de creditorum sibi profectibus talentorum audire meruerunt… Ut autem fiduciam dilectionis erga te nostrae habere non dubites, saepius nos de processu actuum tuorum facias certiores: quoniam judicii nostri memores cupimus semper de tuis profectibus in Domino gloriari.'

123 Leo, *Ep.* 42, 26 August 449, *Circumspectum te*, Jaffé 436.

124 Leo, *Ep.* 67, 5 May 450, *Diu filios nostros*, Jaffé 451.

125 Ibid. 'Habes probabilem facultatem, qua cunctis ecclesiis et Deo nostro episcopatus tui possis commendare primordia, si haec ita, ut credimus atque mandavimus, impleveris, frater charissime.'

126 Leo, *Ep.* 96, July 451, *Ad praecipuum*, Jaffé 477 (Ravennius is to observe Easter on the 23rd of March for the year 451); *Ep.* 138, 28 July 454, *Cum in omnibus*, Jaffé 512.

apostolic see, they hoped to profit from it by seeking from Rome a formal acknowledgment of the arrangement. "It is perfectly clear that the favor of divine grace is present in the church of Arles," the bishops of the province of Arles wrote to Leo, "for [the church] happens to have the sort of bishop through whom it may rejoice that the privileges of ancient honor, the diminution of which saddened [the church] some time ago, are restored permanently by the more recent authority of the apostolic see."[127] Because they understood Leo's disdain for Hilary to be personal, his diminishing of their jurisdictional privileges to be punitive, they did not think such actions betrayed some deeper purpose to undermine permanently the prestige of Arles relative to the Gallic churches.[128] Now that the nemesis of the apostolic see, Hilary, was gone and Ravennius had been chosen to replace him, Leo was asked to restore to Arles the same metropolitan status that the city had enjoyed since antiquity. The same basic request that Hilary had made was, in other words, being revived under the episcopacy of Ravennius. The difference was that the bishops of Arles were careful to repeat the argument that had succeeded for Zosimus (September 417) when he granted Patroclus metropolitan privileges over the region.[129] Appealing to the same legend that Zosimus had revived, the legend of Trophimus (the first metropolitan bishop of Arles who had been sent there by Peter as a missionary), they argued that subsequent bishops of Arles inherited the right to serve in his capacity as a metropolitan because the bishopric was rooted in the special authority granted to it by apostolic sanction: "For just as the sacred church of Rome," they said, "held the primacy among the churches of the entire world through the most blessed Peter, the first of the apostles, so too the church of Arles (which was deemed worthy to have St. Trophimus as a priest sent by the apostles) claims the right of episcopal ordination throughout [the churches

[127] Leo, *Ep.* 65.1, 450 (?), *Memores quantum.* 'Et sane manifestum est ecclesiae Arelatensi divinae gratiae favorem adesse, cui talem habere contigit sacerdotem per quem privilegia dignitatis antiquae, quae dolebat sibi pro tempore diminuta, gauderet in perpetuum recentioribus apostolicae sedis auctoritatibus reformata.'

[128] See ibid. 'Nec enim justum est ut honorem eius quem, ut probavimus, impense diligitis, illa res minuat, qua pietatem vestram alter offendit.' "Nor is it just," said the bishops of Arles, "that that affair, by which another offended your piety, diminishes his (i.e. Ravennius') honor whom, as we have found, you love greatly."

[129] i.e., the provinces of Viennensis and Narbonennsis Prima and Secunda. Zosimus had said that the tradition of Trophimus had bestowed primacy on the see of Arles. See Zosimus, *Mirati admodum*, 26 September 417; see also Zosimus, *Quid de Proculi*, 29 September 417. Griffe, *La Gaule Chrétienne*, vol. 2, pp. 149, 151.

of] Gaul."[130] Their argument was that Ravennius possessed all the qualities that made him a worthy successor to Trophimus. This strategic transformation of the doctrine of apostolic succession made the person, rather than the office alone, the bearer of apostolic tradition.

The second argument advanced by the bishops of Arles was that the secular authority had also recognized the primacy of the city of Arles when Constantine renamed Arles eponymously, and when the emperors Valentinian and Honorius endowed it with privileges by honoring the city with the title 'the mother of all Gaul'. As the new home of the praetorian prefect after the fall of Trier (in the early fifth century), Arles held the 'principatus' in the secular realm. The implication was that ecclesiastical rights should be consistent with the secular laws: "Just as the church of Arles deservedly held the primacy over the ancient bishoprics throughout Gaul, so too did the city itself auspiciously hold the first place in the secular realm."[131] Leo probably found this argument questionable.[132] That he did not chastise the bishops of Arles for basing their claim on the secular prestige of the city indicates that he was determined to consolidate Roman authority in Gaul according to whatever arguments they found persuasive.

One of the salient features of his papacy, after all, was the zeal with which he defended the primacy of the apostolic see against the similar claim made by the bishop of Constantinople. Leo was committed to show that apostolic sanction, and not the presence of imperial rule, was the basis for Rome's authority.[133] The reality was that the two were closely intertwined, both the presence of imperial rule, and then its conspicuous absence, contributing to the power of the apostolic see at various times during his papacy. But as long as the authority of Rome

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[130] Leo, *Ep.* 65.2. '… sicut per beatissimum Petrum apostolorum principem sacrosancta ecclesia Romana teneret supra omnes totius mundi ecclesias principatum, ita etiam intra Gallias Arelatensis ecclesia, quae sanctum Trophimum ab apostolis missum sacerdotem habere meruisset, ordinandi pontificium vindicaret.' The church of Lyon, the earliest in Gaul and the only one that could even plausibly maintain its apostolicity, was probably established in the second century. See F.D. Gilliard, "The Apostolicity of Gallic Churches," *Harvard Theological Review* 68 (1975), pp. 17–33.

[131] Leo, *Ep.* 65.3. '… sicut ecclesia Arelatensis intra Gallias primatum in sacerdotio antiquitatis merito, ita etiam civitas ipsa principatum in saeculo opportunitatis gratia possederit.'

[132] That was the case even though Leo himself had appealed to tradition and antiquity repeatedly ('vetustas', 'antiquitas', and the statutes and canons 'patrum et apostolicae') in making his arguments against Hilary. See *Ep.* 10, Jaffé 407.

[133] By analogy, the same would have to be the case for Gaul.

was acknowledged to reside solely in its apostolic status, then perhaps Leo was willing to extend that status, through Peter's connection to Trophimus, to the bishopric of Arles, and to ignore the argument about the city's secular status. In doing so, he not only gratified Arles' desire to elevate its see, but achieved his own purpose of exercising Roman hegemony in the region through an individual, Ravennius, whose theological views he trusted.

The bishops of Arles understood that this was an opportunity to advance their interests by making Ravennius into a formal representative of the apostolic see, a quasi-vicar whose duty was to administer a unified ecclesiastical law that governed much of southern Gaul: "Such honor and dignity has been granted to him that he governs not only these provinces by his own authority, but he also subjects (on account of the orders issued to him by the apostolic see) all Gaul to the entirety of the ecclesiastical rules."[134] The source of the power that Ravennius drew upon mattered to the bishops of Arles, who thought that power should issue only from Rome, and that power could issue only from Rome, if it were to be recognized by the Gallic churches as legitimate. Unlike Hilary, therefore, Ravennius and his colleagues carefully presented their argument for the elevation of their see by adhering to the model of ecclesiastical leadership that Leo provided.

Granting the broad jurisdictional privileges that Arles requested was to withdraw them from the rival see of Vienne. Even before Leo received the letter from the bishops of Arles, an embassy from the province of Viennensis arrived in Rome carrying a letter from the bishop of Vienne which said that Ravennius had unlawfully consecrated the bishop of Vaison, a city along the Rhine valley in the Viennensis province. It was not long after that Leo's envoys, Petronius and Regulus, returned from their mission to Gaul with the letter from the bishops of Arles. The competing claims of the rival sees were examined in an informal hearing held in Rome, where it was determined that at various times one city or the other was honored. "We find that both Vienne and Arles have always been famous cities in your province … Among the people, however, it is reported that at one time both were under a common jurisdiction."[135] The rivalry between the two cities had been

[134] Leo, *Ep.* 65.3. 'Cui id etiam honoris dignitatisque collatum est, ut non tantum has provincias potestate propria gubernaret, verum etiam omnes Gallias sibi apostolicae sedis vice mandata, sub omni ecclesiastica regula contineret.'

[135] Leo, *Ep.* 66.2, 5 May 450, *Lectis dilectionis vestrae*, Jaffé 450. '… et Viennensem

made into law by the Council of Turin, which honored with the title '*primatus* of the provinces' whichever city, Vienne or Arles, could prove its status as a metropolis.

To alleviate the tension among the Viennensis bishops, Leo decided to split the difference between the sees. The bishop of Vienne was to preside over the neighboring cities of Valence, Tarentaise, Geneva, and Grenoble, while the bishop of Arles was to govern the remaining cities of the province. Because this ruling effectively diminished the jurisdiction exercised by the bishop of Vienne, it is difficult to imagine its bishop receiving such news warmly. Even Leo acknowledged that his decision might be interpreted as a demotion.[136] Only five years earlier Leo had, after all, granted to the bishop of Vienne many of the rights and privileges that Hilary had previously exercised.[137] That Leo restored to Ravennius what he had taken from Hilary underscores the fact that his dispute with Hilary was personal, his sentence upon the see of Arles disciplinary, and its consequences temporary. He was willing to reinstate many of Arles' privileges once the circumstances had changed. Shortly after Leo died in 461, his successor pope Hilary (pope, 461–468) continued the same ecclesiastical policies that Leo had put into place more than a decade earlier: he recognized the new bishop of Arles, Leontius, as a papal representative, a quasi-vicar of the apostolic see who was to maintain ecclesiastical discipline and convene yearly councils.[138]

While this arrangement enabled Arles to elevate its see over its rival in southern Gaul, it provided Leo the opportunity to consolidate papal hegemony in the region. What this meant practically speaking was that his christological views encountered no conspicuous resistance from the bishops of Gaul. Unquestioningly, they praised his *Tome* to Flavian of Constantinople, which summarized the christological doctrine that was eventually to be accepted by the Council of Chalcedon in 451. Three

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et Arelatensem civitates claras fuisse reperimus … cum tamen eisdem commune jus quondam fuisse a gentibus proderetur.'

[136] Ibid.

[137] Ibid. 'Unde Viennensem civitatem, quantum ad ecclesiasticam justitiam pertinet, inhonoratam penitus esse non patimur; praesertim cum de receptione privilegii, auctoritate jam nostrae dispositionis utatur;' "We do not permit the city of Vienne to go completely without honor as far as ecclesiastical jurisdiction is concerned; especially since it received its privilege based on the authority of our arrangement."

[138] Hilary went so far as to call the region of Arles, over which Leonce presided, 'his monarchy' ('monarchia'). Hilary, 3 November 462, *Miramur fraternitatem*, Jaffé 554. Griffe, *La Gaule Chrétienne*, vol. 2, pp. 163–164.

of the Gallic bishops who read the *Tome*, Ceretius, Salonius, and Veranus, said they were only too grateful for the theological direction it provided: "We appreciate the concern of your fatherly piety on our behalf, and confess that we are the more indebted to your preventative care because we now have the benefit of the remedy before experiencing the evils."[139] They and others who read it, said the Gallic bishops, found its doctrinal teaching so accurate and compelling that everyone agreed that Rome "deserved to hold the primacy of the apostolic see, where the oracles of the apostolic spirit are still revealed."[140] Although the sentiment expressed was obsequious enough that its sincerity might be questioned, Leo's *Tome* was, in fact, becoming very popular in Gaul, and not only among the ecclesiastical elite. Members of the laity were also reading the *Tome*. To accommodate both types of readers, Leo was to make the Gallic copy of the *Tome* conform to the official and latest version of the text. The bishops wanted a clean and accurate copy before committing the text to parchment ('folia') for the Gallic bishops and laity, "who greatly desire to [receive] this letter for the sake of revealing the truth that they may be allowed (once it has been corrected by your holy hand) to copy, read, and keep it."[141] With copies being made for many of the churches, the *Tome* was apparently being read by those who were able to do so, and being listened to by the rest.

Leo's consolidation of Roman hegemony in the region through his quasi-representative did not mean that the veneer of flattery that this inspired was free from a deeper ambivalence. Although the Gallic bishops said one thing, their official acceptance of the *Tome* was, in fact, slow in coming. Only after Leo's delegates had left Rome to attend the Council of Chalcedon did they hold a synod, where they unanimously subscribed to its doctrine. Leo was, however, greatly disappointed by their delay in approving the document, because he had hoped to send a copy of their decree with the papal delegates traveling to Chalcedon.[142] Sensing his disappointment, the Gallic bishops assured him that their failure to approve the *Tome* promptly did not signal any disagreement with its content. It was because of inclement weather and the difficulties

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[139] Leo, *Ep.* 68.1, May/June (?) 450, *Recensita epistola.*

[140] Ibid. '… merito illic principatum sedis apostolicae constitutum, unde adhuc apostolici spiritus oracula reserentur.'

[141] Ibid. 68.2. '… qui epistolam istam magnopere pro veritatis manifestatione desiderant, remissam ad nos, et sancta manu vestra emendatam transcribere, legere et tenere mereantur.'

[142] Leo, *Ep.* 99, 451 (?), *Perlata ad nos.*

of travel that the synod was tardily convened: "We had hoped to report immediately to your apostleship [our] thanksgiving for such a priceless gift, if both the long stretches of land through which we wandered and the excessive [force] of the winds, which in our areas was quite unusual, had not imposed a [great] difficulty to our coming sooner to [meet] you. Let your apostleship therefore grant us an indulgence for our tardiness, which does not arise from sloth or dissimulation, but from circumstances [beyond our control]."[143] To further assure Leo of the legitimacy and sincerity of the synod, Ravennius explained that its members followed ecclesiastical procedure by understanding the 'sense of the faith', by following the patristic tradition ('traditio paterna'), and by rejoicing in the apostleship of Rome. There is some indication, however, that several among them were at first reluctant to subscribe to the *Tome*, "those who were anxious ('nonnulli sollicitiores facti') until they understood Leo's admonition." If that is the case, then the extent of and reason for the dissension can no longer be discerned. This ambivalent minority having been nearly erased from the sources, what remains in the record is the united front of the forty-two bishops that Ravennius and the synod presented, those whose signatures affixed to the letter signaled their unanimous assent to Rome's doctrinal views.

How much of the christological content these Gallic bishops understood remains unclear. The controversy that the *Tome* addressed was mainly the province of the eastern churches. Nothing in the letter from Gaul suggests that its bishops and clergy understood any of the finer points of the christological debate. Leo may have reached a similar conclusion. One year later (27 January 452), he laboriously explained to the bishops of Gaul the doctrinal conclusions of Chalcedon: Nestorius believed that Mary bore only the man, who was later divinized by the Word, while Eutyches believed that the Word of God was made into a flesh different from that of ordinary human beings.[144] Although this way of construing the debate was a simplified distortion of these two very different christological views, its easy language and schematic theology would have been generally accepted by the Gallic bishops.[145]

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[143] Ibid. 99.1. '… nisi nobis difficultatem, qua in unum celeriter non potuimus convenire, vel spatia, quibus a nobis dispalati sumus, longa terrarum, vel aurarum, quae in regionibus nostris praeter consuetudinem fuit, intemperies attulisset. Det ergo apostolatus vester nostrae veniam tarditati, quae non de otio aut dissimulatione, sed de certa necessitate descendit.'

[144] Leo, *Ep.* 102.3, 27 January 452, *Optassemus quidem*, Jaffé 479.

[145] See Leo, *Ep.* 103, February (?) 452, *Impletis per*, Jaffé 480. Soon after Leo sent

By the late 450s, Leo had solidified Rome's relationship with the bishops and clergy of Gaul, who now consulted Rome for advice in matters of ecclesiastical discipline and law. The good relations between them were fully apparent in Leo's final (extant) correspondence with the churches of Gaul. Rusticus, the bishop of Narbonne, wrote to Leo (458/9) for help in dealing with a disciplinary matter that had arisen in one of his churches.[146] Leo complied willingly by offering several pages of pastoral counseling and decretals. That Rusticus elicited such advice from Rome is a mark of how much the relationship between Rome and the Gallic churches had thawed since the death of Hilary and of how willing its bishops were to subscribe ostensibly to Rome's doctrinal and disciplinary views. No matter whether some ambivalence toward Roman hegemony remained, the clergy and bishops of Gaul had decided to integrate their hierarchy, as well as their rhetoric, into the Roman model of ecclesiastical leadership.[147]

2. *Ecclesiastical law is debated and settled in North Africa*

The situation in North Africa was even more complicated than in Gaul. From at least as early as the Donatists, who had refused to readmit to catholicism those who had lapsed during the persecutions of Diocletian (303–305), North Africans were of two minds when it came to assessing their relationship with Rome. The catholic opposition collaborated with Roman imperial forces to suppress this rigorist sect whose strong moralizing tendencies appealed to the African fascination with "social conscience, religious enthusiasm and nationalist sentiment," yet whose failure to articulate a church organization inad-

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his letter (*Ep.* 102), the Gallic bishops received a copy of the official condemnation of Eutyches and Dioscorus, which the papal legates had brought from Chalcedon (*Ep.* 103). The churches of Gaul were thereby informed of and integrated into the Roman view of Chalcedon.

[146] Leo, *Ep.* 167, 458/9(?), *Epistolas fraternitatis*, Jaffé 544. For a discussion of Leo's rulings, see Chapter 2.2. An inscription in a church built by Rusticus survives. From it we learn that his father, Bonosus, was a bishop, and so was his uncle, Arator, that he entered a monastery where he became friends with Venerius, who would later become the bishop of Marseille, and then became a priest in the church of Marseille. *Corpus inscript. lat.*, XII, n. 5336. Griffe, *La Gaule Chrétienne*, vol. 2, pp. 265–266.

[147] The Gallic church in the fifth century was basically an aristocratic, Gallo-Roman institution, by which Gallo-Romans could preserve their *Romanitas* in the light of the barbarian presence. Mathisen, *Roman Aristocrats in Barbarian Gaul*, p. 104.

equately addressed the challenges of life under Vandal rule.[148] There was a deep commitment to preserving the autonomy of the African churches, an outgrowth perhaps of the distinctive quality of a native religion that saw its pagan god Ba'al /Saturn as the monotheistic embodiment of the fiercest kind of implacable divinity.[149] The martyrdom that was so greatly prized among Africans during the persecutions and that was the occasion for the Donatist schism was, according to one scholar, the Christian expression of the native cult's tradition of human sacrifice.[150] Autonomy was prized among the Africans, in other words, because there was something uniquely African that had been synthesized into its Christian culture and that intermittently needed to be expressed.

There also existed, sometimes simultaneously and at other times alternately, a sincere longing to make that African tradition legitimate by connecting it to the larger world of christendom. Throughout much of the Pelagian controversy, the anti-Pelagian bishops of Africa conspired with the anti-Pelagian popes in Rome to defeat their common adversary by acknowledging the special authority wielded by the papacy in its capacity as the highest court for ecclesiastical appeals.[151] This mutually advantageous relationship was officially confirmed when popes Boniface and Caelestine ratified the African canons issued by the Council of Carthage in 418, thereby signaling to the African church that Rome approved of its doctrine,[152] and assuring the papacy that the Africans deferred to its judgment. Just how elusive the precise nature of these undercurrents was can be gathered from the fact that no more than a year later, the Africans, having greatly resented the papacy's attempt to supervise (through its legate) a reverse sentence issued by it, decided to limit papal jurisdiction in Africa "by denying communion to clergy who circumvented the judgment of primate and provincial council … and in a synodal letter of the Council of Carthage of 424,

[148] J. Ferguson, "Aspects of Early Christianity in North Africa," in eds. L.A. Thompson, J. Ferguson, *Africa in Classical Antiquity* (Nigeria, 1969), p. 189.

[149] Ibid. Note that the rise of Christianity in Africa should not be connected to a resurgence of the local culture. P. Brown, "Christianity and Local Culture in Late Roman Africa," *JRS* 58 (1968), pp. 85–95.

[150] Ferguson, "Aspects of Early Christianity in North Africa," p. 189.

[151] C. Ocker, "Augustine, Episcopal Interests, and the Papacy in Late Roman Africa," *JEH* 42 (1991), p. 179.

[152] Ibid., p. 180. See generally R.P. Beaver, "The Organization of the Church of Africa on the Eve of the Vandal Invasions," *Church History* 5, 2 (1936), pp. 168–181.

[by forbidding] all appeals to Rome."[153] Behavior that was seemingly capricious was, in fact, consistent with the inclination on the part of the Africans to form a papal alliance mainly when it served their provincial concerns.[154] No matter how rebellious this synodal pronouncement seemed, there was no intent to reject outright the Roman primacy of which they had availed themselves successfully during the Donatist and Pelagian controversies. There was only the determination to assert the spirit of African autonomy that had, paradoxically, earned them papal approval some six years earlier.

With the conquest of North Africa by the Vandals in 429 and their establishment of a Vandal kingdom in Proconsularis ten years later, a new set of priorities occupied the region.[155] A kind of "war of religion" prevailed in the sense that Geiseric, the king of the Vandals, and his forces set out to convert the catholic masses to their variety of Arianism (which taught that Christ was less than God).[156] Modéran has identified two levels on which this "conversion" occurred: the first was the more radical form, in which churches and their wealth were confiscated, and catholic ordinations and rites were prohibited; and the second, the more limited, in which mainly the episcopacy was targeted.[157] Although the early catholic church uniformly described this process as a persecution in which local aristocrats were tortured, the city's wealth confiscated, and churches plundered and then converted to living quarters for the Vandal soldiers, Modéran has argued convincingly that the more radical confiscations and persecutions were limited to Proconsularis.[158] In the other provinces, the assaults upon the catholic clergy

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[153] Ocker, "Augustine, Episcopal Interests, and the Papacy in Late Roman Africa," p. 181.

[154] Ibid. See generally C. Courtois, *Les Vandales et l'Afrique* (Paris, 1955), pp. 175–176.

[155] The Vandal conquest of North Africa took place in May 429. According to Prosper, they had entered Africa from Spain in 427 (the year was actually 428) after the civil war between the Roman generals Boniface and Felix left the Mediterranean vulnerable to barbarians and "the sea was made passible … to people who had not known how to make use of ships." Prosper, *Epit. Chron.*, a. 427, 1294; a. 417, 1295.

[156] The phrase is that of Y. Modéran, "Une guerre de religion: les deux églises d'Afrique à l'époque Vandale," *Antiquité Tardive* 11 (2003), p. 23; F.B. Mapwar, "La résistance de l'Église catholique à la foi arienne en Afrique du Nord: un exemple d'une église locale inculturée?" in *Cristianesimo e specificità regionali nel Mediterraneo latino (sec IV–VI)*, (Rome, 1994), p. 199.

[157] Modéran, "Une guerre de religion: les deux églises d'Afrique à l'époque Vandale," p. 25.

[158] Ibid., p. 26. For the view that prevails among the catholic sources, see Prosper, *Epit. Chron.*, a. 439, 1339: "[Geiseric] was savage to every [rank and file] of the captured

were perhaps more insidious: bishops who refused to subscribe to Arianism were, if not openly persecuted,[159] gradually rendered *persona non grata* so far as the Vandal state was concerned.[160] How many bishoprics had been affected by this Arian mission to infiltrate the catholic hierarchy and to undermine its influence among the people is difficult to say. It is safe to assume, however, that by the time Leo wrote to the bishops of the Mauritania Caesariensis province in August 446 (*Epistula* 12), nearly twenty years after the Vandals entered North Africa and seven years after they defeated Carthage, Arianism was a force for the catholic churches to contend with.[161] This is not to suggest that the Vandals were the first to introduce Arianism to the region. Augustine confronted real Arians in his *Contra sermonem Arianorum* (c. 418), in which he addressed the Gothic variety of Arianism brought into Italy by Alaric and Ataulphus, and in his *Collatio cum Maximino Arianorum episcopo* (c. 427), a record of a conference held with an Arian bishop named Maximinus.[162] The difference was that until the Vandals appeared, Arianism remained an isolated phenomenon that could not bring the power of the state to bear upon the catholic clergy and people.[163] All that changed with the settlement of the Vandal Arians in

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populace, but he was so especially hostile to the nobility and to the pious that it could not be determined whether he waged war rather on God or men." 'in universum captivi populi ordinem saevus, sed praecipue nobilitati et religioni infensus, ut non discerneretur, hominibus magis an deo bellum intulisset.'

[159] See the account of Prosper, *Epit. Chron.*, a. 437, 1327. "Geiseric, … wishing to overthrow the catholic faith with the Arian impiety …, persecuted some of our bishops, the most famous of whom were Possidius, Novatus, and Severianus, to such an extent that he deprived them of the use of their churches and even banished them from their city when their constancy would yield to none of the terrors [inflicted by this] most arrogant king." 'Gisiricus … volens cathlicam fidem Arriana impietate subvertere, quosdam nostrorum episcopos, quorum Posidius et Novatus ac Severianus clariores erant, eatenus persecutus est, ut eos privatos iure basilicarum suarum etiam civitatibus pelleret, cum ipsorum constantia nullis superbissimi regis terroribus cederet.' See L.J. van der Lof, "Der fanatische Arianismus der Wandalen," *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche* 64 (1973), pp. 146–151.

[160] Mapwar, "La résistance de l'Église catholique à la foi arienne en Afrique du Nord," p. 199, citing Victor of Vita, *Historia persecutionis africanae provinciae*, 1,4.17–18, ed. C. Halm, *MGH AA*, III, 1; M. Petschenig, ed., CSEL 7 (1881) 7,4; 8–9.

[161] F.M. Clover, *The Late Roman West and the Vandals* (Aldershot, 1993) VI.3; X.58–59; J. Zeiller, 'L'arianisme en Afrique avant l'invasion vandale,' *Revue historique* 173 (1934), pp. 535–540.

[162] Mapwar, "La résistance de l'Église catholique à la foi arienne en Afrique du Nord," pp. 196–197; Quasten, *Patrology* 4, pp. 106, 392.

[163] Mapwar, "La résistance de l'Église catholique à la foi arienne en Afrique du Nord," p. 197.

429, thereby signaling to the catholic hierarchy that the time was ripe for renewing its alliance with the papacy. Like Boniface and Caelestine during the Pelagian affair, Leo, I suggest, was well positioned to further the interests of catholic Africans by advancing his vision of papal hegemony.

It is worth remarking that nowhere in the letter to the bishops of the Mauritania Caesariensis province was the problem of Arianism raised. The matter that occupied Leo was the status and quality of the episcopal appointments that had been made in the region.[164] Visitors to Rome who had traveled from Carthage informed him that some of their bishops had been irregularly appointed amid violent demonstrations by the people. Who might these visitors have been? In 445, one year before Leo wrote to the province, there was a formal delegation from North Africa to Rome which had been sent to request tax relief from Valentinian.[165] Among the members of the delegation may have been representatives of the pro-Nicene churches who disapproved of the violent methods to which some of its members resorted. To investigate the charge, Leo sent his legate Potentius to the province of Mauritania, where he arrived with a papal letter.[166] He was to represent the interests of Rome, examine the accuracy of the visitors' reports, and, finally, describe the circumstances to Leo. When Potentius returned to Rome, he reported that certain bishops had been appointed in order to quiet the unrest caused by the riots there. These irregular appointments were the same 'illegal episcopal consecrations' that the visitors had spoken of. Convinced that Potentius' account was accurate, Leo complained that uncanonical episcopal appointments had been made simply in order to placate the people. In what respect the consecrations were irregular Leo does not say. His advice for the proper selection of bishops suggests that young men, lacking experience, were being appointed. "[Paul said] 'Do not lay hands hastily upon anyone, and do not be a partner in other men's sins.' What does 'lay hands hastily' mean if not to bestow the episcopal honor to the untested before the age of maturity, before a period of struggle, before their obedience merited it, before they had experienced discipline?"[167] The unruly context in which such persons

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[164] Leo, *Ep.* 12, 10 August 446, *Cum de ordinationibus*, Jaffé 410.

[165] Jalland, p. 106.

[166] Although the letter has been lost, Leo describes its contents briefly in *Ep.* 12.1, Jaffé 410.

[167] Leo, *Ep.* 12.2, Jaffé 410. '… *Manus cito nemini imposueris, neque communices peccatis alienis* (1 Tim. 5:22)? Quid est *cito manus imponere*, nisi ante aetatem maturitatis, ante tempus

were chosen also made the appointments irregular. His argument was derived from an analogy to secular politics, where acquiring the *principatus* through sedition or campaigning implicitly cast a shadow upon its legitimacy, even when no scandalous conduct or action was involved.[168]

To concede power to the rioting masses was pernicious in another sense as well because it contributed to the same disorder that the concession was meant to alleviate.[169] Disorder, as Leo saw it, was not only the result of riots and civil strife, but of failing to adhere to the ecclesiastical principles governing the appointment of church officials, which principles were to ensure that only those whom the community deemed worthy of the office were chosen. To circumvent, through hasty and violent appointments, the steady accumulation of experience and qualifications that these regulations required was to subvert the legitimacy of the hierarchy. According to this way of perceiving the world, order was the inevitable outcome of submitting to the Roman system of ecclesiastical procedure and discipline. Riots were not only the physical manifestation of civil and ecclesiastical strife, but a metaphor for the deeper, underlying sense of disorder that was the result of disobeying Rome.

What caused the riots is difficult to say. Peasant revolt was a settled feature of the African social landscape by the mid-fourth century, by which time the circumcellions had distinguished themselves as a revolutionary group to be reckoned with.[170] Although their commitment to subverting the social hierarchy was motivated by a secular interest in addressing the unequal distribution of wealth and privilege among the peasants and slaves and the ruling class, they did not hesitate to join forces with a religious cause when the alliance furthered their political agenda.[171] Just as the circumcellions collaborated with the (anti-Catholic) Donatists to attack the Catholic establishment, whose interests coincided with the Roman ruling elite, so they may have supported the anti-Arians under Vandal rule.[172] There was no inconsis-

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examinis, ante meritum obedientiae, ante experientiam disciplinae sacerdotalem honorem tribuere non probatis?'

168 Leo, *Ep.* 12.1, Jaffé 410.

169 Ibid. "This is not to deliberate for the interests of the people but to harm them; this is not to offer governance but to increase dissension." 'Non est hoc consulere populis, sed nocere, nec praestare regimen, sed augere discrimen.'

170 B. Baldwin, "Peasant Revolt in Africa in the Late Roman Empire," *Notthingham Medieval Studies* 6 (1961), p. 8.

171 See generally R.P. Duncan-Jones, "Wealth and Munificence in Roman North Africa," *Papers of the British School at Rome* 31 (1963), pp. 159–177.

172 Baldwin, "Peasant Revolt in Africa in the Late Roman Empire," p. 11.

tency in supporting the anti-Catholics, on the one hand, and then the pro-Catholics, on the other, because the deeper congruity lay in their continuing alliance against the propertied classes. Given the persistence of the circumcellions well into the late-fifth century, when the Vandal king Huneric issued a decree that fined them (and others) for supporting the catholic clergy,[173] it is plausible to conclude that they fueled the riots that occurred during the consecrations. The people may have elicited their support in protesting the appointment of Arian bishops by the ruling Vandals.

We can infer from Leo's remark that "the riot of the populace ('tumultus popularis') held so much weight with [the bishops] in a time of disorder," that the episcopal candidate put forth violently by the people had been installed successfully into the ecclesiastical hierarchy. In selecting someone from among their ranks, the rioters may have installed someone whose theological views were sympathetic to Nicene orthodoxy and who was capable of opposing the Arianism that the Vandals championed.[174] Perhaps that is what happened in the case of Aggaeus and Tyberianus, both of whom were consecrated while laymen and whose consecrations were accompanied by violence.[175] That both had been elected amid civil strife confirms that rival factions had formed there, perhaps (as already suggested) between those whose views were congenial to the Arianism of the Vandals and those who remained loyal to the Nicene Christianity that was the norm in North Africa until the Vandals arrived.

Did Leo attempt to advance his papal claims to the region by quietly disregarding the Arian bishops appointed by the Vandals? That he was certainly aware of the presence of Arians can be confirmed by his association with Prosper, whose *Chronica* (as we have seen) vividly documented the problem. That he never mentioned their presence, however, indicates either how little he understood the difficulties of life under Vandal rule, or, more likely, how well he grasped the complexity of bringing the African churches within his jurisdiction. To discuss the problem of Arian bishops openly would have been to acknowledge the gravity of the rioters' situation and even to concede that their violent methods were effective. He was reluctant to do this because he was

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173 Ibid.

174 The Council of Nicaea had, of course, opposed Arianism.

175 Leo, *Ep.* 12.7, Jaffé 410.

unwilling to sacrifice the illusion of a unified ecclesiastical law in order to address the more immediate hardships facing the African churches.

Leo furthered his interest in extending papal hegemony by suggesting that adhering to a circumscribed set of canons would bring North Africa into communion with Rome and, therefore, ostensibly protect it from the abuses of the Arian clergy. In the light of that interest, the remainder of the letter consisted mainly in clarifications of the rules that governed bishops, including their ordination, promotion, and marital history, as well as the ecclesiastical status of those who renounced their affiliation with the Donatists and Novatians, the schismatic sects that excluded all persons who had faltered during the persecutions.[176] In recognition of the harsh conditions of life in a province that had been fully conquered by its Vandal invaders, Leo conceded that virgins who had been raped were to continue to receive the sacraments, even though they were not to be counted among the undefiled.[177]

It remains to be considered how the North African churches perceived Leo's pronouncements. Some scholars, moved perhaps by the synodal letter of 424 prohibiting all appeals to Rome, have suggested that the province some twenty years later continued to violate the canons defiantly in order to separate itself willfully and intentionally from its ecclesiastical leadership. There is something to be said for this cynical view. Perhaps the province of North Africa saw in the Vandal invasions, and in the disruption to social and religious life that ensued, an opportunity finally to assert their ecclesiastical autonomy. No longer under the sway of papal hegemony, they were free to install as bishops whomever they pleased, with little regard for the principles of the canons. The same circumstance of irregular consecrations might be construed differently. In making ordinations that violated the canons, the North Africans may not have intentionally set out to be defiant. During the Vandal conquests, the unstable political conditions would have made travel between Rome and North Africa that much more treacherous. With their channels of communication dwindling, the ecclesiastical leadership there was probably uninformed of the finer points of the law. Or perhaps the bishops of the province were willing to forego strict compliance with the law in order to restore the semblance of order to their province. Order, from their point of view, would have consisted in securing episcopal appointments that were consistent with

[176] See generally Courtois, *Les Vandales et l'Afrique*, pp. 175–176.
[177] Leo, *Ep.* 12.8, 12.11, Jaffé 410.

the Nicene Christianity to which the majority of Roman North Africans had subscribed. This is where their ideology differed from Leo's: stability, so far as Leo was concerned, resided in the more or less uniform application of laws that Rome issued, not in the violent actions of the masses.

That appeals to Rome were permitted 22 years after the council of 424 is evident from the case of Lupicinus. A local Mauritanian bishop otherwise unknown, he initiated Leo's intervention when he filed an appeal with Rome.[178] Although the charges against him remain obscure, Lupicinus had been excommunicated in an ecclesiastical trial. After making several appeals to Rome, he was eventually restored to communion on two grounds: (i) he had been excommunicated unjustly while his case was still being tried; (ii) another bishop had been consecrated hastily to replace him, even though he had not been convicted in a proper trial and had never confessed to the charges against him. Without discussing the merits of the case, Leo overturned the decision of the North African trial on the procedural ground that the sentence had been reached prematurely and that the bishop consecrated to replace Lucipinus was, therefore, illegitimate.

The progress of the relationship between Rome and North Africa can be discerned through a textual analysis of Leo's letter to the bishops of Mauritania and Caesariensis, the same *Epistula* 12 being discussed here and the only extant letter between Leo and the African churches. Its structure suggests that two letters have been combined, rather than the single letter that it purports to be. Since both letters dealt with matters pertaining to the canons in the African province, the second letter was appended to the first and then filed in the papal archives as the single document that has come down to us. The end of the first part of the letter is marked by Leo's summation that he has instructed the bishops of North Africa fully about the matters contained in the report of his legate Potentius, and that "[they are to] accept unanimously our salutary exhortations and, doing nothing contentious and being unanimous in [their] zealous devotion, obey the divine and apostolic constitutions and not permit the most prudent canonical decrees to be violated in any way."[179] After chastising the bishops for having

[178] Ibid. 12.12, Jaffé 410.

[179] Ibid. 12.9, Jaffé 410. '… ut concorditer salubres suscipiatis hortatus, et nihil per contentionem agentes, sed ad omne studium devotionis unanimes, divinis et apostoli-

permitted some among them to be consecrated irregularly, the letter properly ends. In the second letter appended to it, Leo informed the bishops of the canon limiting the consecration of bishops to large cities, he elaborated upon his ruling on the status of defiled virgins, and settled the appeal of Lupicinus.[180]

It is significant that in all instances the laws that Leo decreed were consistent with the canons of the Council of Sardica (343/4): canon 10 forbade novices from being ordained bishop, canon 6 discouraged the appointment of bishops to unimportant cities, and canon 4 prevented a new bishop from being ordained to replace a deposed bishop whose case was on appeal with Rome. It was this council, the canons of which were accepted in Rome as the equivalent of Nicaea's, that "granted the papacy the authority to function as a 'court of appeals' in the Western Church."[181] Although accepted in Rome, its canons had been rejected by the North African churches, very few of its bishops having signed its decrees. From Athanasius we learn that only one hundred and seventy bishops and clergy met at the Council of Sardica in Illyricum, which many believed was insufficient to make its canons universally binding upon the churches.[182] Since the Vandal conquest of Carthage in 439, however, the churches of Mauritania had lost their ecclesiastical center. Bereft of their local leadership and under the oppression of the Arian Vandals, they were more willing than ever to consider the judgments of Rome and follow its canonical rulings, even if that meant tacitly accepting the Sardican council as legitimate.[183]

This willingness to acquiesce to Rome is fully apparent in the second part of *Epistula* 12, where Leo encouraged the bishops of the province

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cis constitutionibus pareatis, et in nullo patiamini providentissima canonum decreta violari.'

[180] Leo, *Ep.* 12.9–12.13 (i.e., the end of the letter), Jaffé 410.

[181] Ocker, "Augustine, Episcopal Interests, and the Papacy in Late Roman Africa," p. 179 and n. 3.

[182] Athanasius, *Ep. ad Solitar.*, 15. To make the council universal, signatures from absent bishops were needed. About two-hundred signatures were gathered and mainly from Egypt: ninety-four signatures from that province were affixed to the council's decrees. Still, Athanasius called it a 'great council' and Sulpitius Severus said that bishops and clergy and gathered from the entire world ('ex toto orbe convocata'). NPNF 14, p. 435.

[183] Jalland, p. 112, observed: "Now, however, [the place of Carthage] has been taken by the papacy, and the primacy of Carthage has ceased to exist. Not less significant of this change is the reliance which Leo places on the authority of the Sardican canons, apparently without any fear that their validity in the situation will be questioned."

to file appeals with Rome only after they had fully addressed the matter in an ecclesiastical trial. Cases requiring further deliberation were to be settled by Rome, while those that had already been resolved satisfactorily were to receive its stamp of approval.[184] (Perhaps the bishops were urged to settle cases locally because they were filing papal appeals too frequently.)

The relationship between Rome and North Africa had changed perceptibly since the time of Caelestine, during whose papacy the members of the synod of Carthage (in 424) had revealed their disdain for papal intervention in local ecclesiastical affairs. In the course of Leo's papacy the North African churches continued to evolve with respect to their relationship to Rome from being a distant object of papal disapproval to a voluntary participant in the extension of papal hegemony. This more subtle shift can be discerned in the progress of *Epistula* 12, the first part of which reveals that Leo had approached the province critically and generally on his own initiative,[185] while the second part indicates that the Mauritanian bishops, who were ready to abide by Rome's judgment, sought its guidance voluntarily.

3. *Priscillianism is confronted in Spain*

Between Rome and the catholic bishops of Spain there prevailed a spirit of steady collaboration that was the consequence of opposing a common enemy. That enemy was the Priscillianists, the eponymous heirs to the teaching of Priscillian, an aristocratic layman who, beginning in the 370's, promoted an expansive interpretation of the canon, the authority for which was rooted in the individual sanctity of the

[184] Leo, *Ep.* 12.13, Jaffé 410. 'Si quae vero aliae emerserint causae quae ad statum ecclesiasticum et ad concordiam pertineant sacerdotum, illic … volumus ventilentur, et de componendis atque compositis omnibus ad nos relatio plena mittatur ut ea, quae iuxta ecclesiasticum morem iuste et rationabiliter fuerint definita, nostra quoque sententia roborentur.' "If any other cases [i.e., in addition to Lupicinus'] arise concerning the ecclesiastical situation and harmony among the bishops, we want you to thresh them out there… And then a full report of all matters settled and still needing settlement should be sent to us, so that those issues that are to be decided upon justly and rationally according to ecclesiastical custom be also authorized by our judgment."

[185] Although Potentius, a Mauritanian, was the first to inform Leo of the canonical problems with several recent episcopal appointments, it was only later that the Mauritanian bishops consulted Rome more generally.

interpreter,[186] as well as a rigorous asceticism that was the practical and visible manifestation of a seemingly dualistic cosmology.[187] This message was perceived as threatening enough to the episcopal hierarchy of Spain that several of its members gathered at Saragossa some ten years later (380) to curtail a variety of asceticism that subverted the established social order by effectively reaching "out of the towns and into the country, where the bishops could not control it."[188] Only later, over the course of the next six years (from the period immediately following the Council of Saragossa in 380 until his execution by the civil authorities at Trier in 386),[189] was Priscillian deliberately transformed from the rigorous ascetic whose practices undermined episcopal authority, to the much more dangerous heretic and sorcerer whose cosmological dualism, reading of apocryphal books, and intimate meetings were presumed to disclose a penchant for Manichaeism.[190] By the time bishop Turibius of Astorga wrote to Leo in July 447 of the burgeoning Priscillianists, their genealogy as heretics of the most pernicious sort had already been established.

Prosper, for instance, thought that Priscillianism derived from Manichaeism (and gnosticism), a sentiment shared by Augustine in his *de Haeresibus* and more fully explored in his *contra Priscillianistas et Origenistas*, and by the Gallic Chronicler of 452, who intentionally conflated the heresies in his account of their execution by the secular officials: "At Trier, Manichaeans [i.e., Priscillians] who were arrested, [thanks to] the utmost diligence of [the emperor] Maximus, were exe-

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[186] A.S. Jacobs, "The Disorder of Books: Priscillian's Canonical Defense of Apocrypha," *Harvard Theological Review* 93, 2 (2000), p. 153. See e.g., Priscillian, *De fide et apocryphis*, tract. 3, 56–57, ed. G. Schepss, *Priscilliani quae supersunt*, *CSEL* 18 (Vienna, 1889), pp. 44–45, where Priscillian cites the epistle of Jude (whom he identifies with Judas Thomas) to show that Enoch prophesied the future judgment. (See *Ep.* Jude, 14–23). He was not saying that the canon, which was set by mystical principles, should be enlarged, only that prophetic and authoritative teachings could be found beyond its limits. See H. Chadwick, *Priscillian of Avila: the Occult and the Charismatic in the Early Church* (Oxford, 1976), pp. 80, 83. Of their division of the Scriptures, Leo, *Ep.* 15.13, 21 July 447, *Quam laudabiliter pro*, Jaffé 412, wrote: "the body of canonical Scripture they accept under the names of the twelve patriarchs." He was referring to the number-mysticism they used to circumscribe the Pauline canon. Chadwick, *Priscillian of Avila*, p. 83.

[187] V. Burrus, *The Making of a Heretic: Gender, Authority, and the Priscillianist Controversy* (Berkeley, CA, 1995), p. 49; M. Kulikowski, *Late Roman Spain and its Cities* (Baltimore, 2004), p. 243.

[188] Ibid., pp. 248–249.

[189] See Prosper, *Epit. Chron.*, a. 385, 1187.

[190] Burrus, *The Making of a Heretic*, p. 49; Kulikowski, *Late Roman Spain and its Cities*, p. 245.

cuted."[191] This heretical lineage was accepted and then expanded upon by Leo. For asserting that the souls of human beings were part of the divine, for rejecting marriage, for fasting on the feast of the Nativity,[192] for denying the resurrection of the body, and for reading apocryphal books and corrupting the Scriptures, their views, he argued, were identical to the Manichaeans', with whom they shared a similar penchant for stealth and moral depravity. "They come together in the catholic church with such deviant views in order to convert whomever they can and to escape the rigor of the law while pretending to be one of us. The Priscillians do this, the Manichaeans too… In their detestable mysteries (which the more foul they are, so the more carefully concealed), their crime is certainly one, their obscenity one, and their defilement similar."[193] Priscillian himself was aware of the charge which he furiously denied in a collection of eleven pieces known as the Würzburg tractates.[194] There was good reason, however, for Leo and others to have made the connection. Like the Manichaeans, Priscillian envisioned a cosmic struggle between the sons of light and the sons of darkness that

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[191] Prosper, *Epit. Chron.*, a. 379, 1171; Augustine, *de Haeresibus*, 70, PL 42, 44; *Ad Orosium contra Priscillianistas et Origenistas*, 1, 4, PL 42, 669, 671; *Chronica Gallica a. 452*, a. 383, 12. 'Apud Treveros Manichaei deprehensi summo Maximi studio exterminati.' ('exterminere': lit. "to banish", but here it means "to kill" or "to execute".) On the conflation of the two heresies, see F. Decret, "Du bon usage du mensonge et du parjure Manichéens et Priscillianistes face à la persécution dans l'Empire chrétien (IVe–Ve siècles)," in *Essais sur l'Église Manichéenne en Afrique du Nord et à Rome au temps de saint Augustin* (Rome, 1995), pp. 115–124.

[192] Leo, *Ep.* 15.4, Jaffé 412. 'Quod utique ideo faciunt quia Christum Dominum in vera hominis natura natum esse non credunt, sed per quamdam illusionem ostentata videri volunt quae vera non fuerint; sequentes dogmata Cerdonis atque Marcionis, et cognatis suis Manichaeis per omnia consonantes.' "No doubt they do this [i.e., fast] for that reason, namely, because they do not believe that Christ the Lord was born in the true nature of man, but because they wish to see manifest through a certain illusion things that have not been true; [they do so] following the dogmas of Cerdon and Marcion and in agreement with their own kinsmen, the Manichaeans."

[193] Ibid. 15.16. 'Ideo enim ad ecclesiam catholicam cum tanta cordis diversitate conveniunt, ut et quos possunt suos faciant, et legum severitatem, dum se nostros mentiuntur, effugiant. Faciunt hoc Priscillianistae, faciunt Manichaei … In exsecrabilibus autem mysteriis eorum, quae quanto immundiora sunt, tanto diligentius occuluntur, unum prorsus nefas est, una est obscenitas et similis turpitudo.' Although Leo compared the immorality of the Priscillianists to that of the Manichaeans, their morality was not his primary concern. See A. Ferreiro, "Priscillian and Nicolaitism," *VC* 52 (1998), p. 389.

[194] H. Chadwick, *Priscillian of Avila: the Occult and the Charismatic in the Early Church* (Oxford, 1976), p. 62. Chadwick identifies five texts that were likely produced by the original Priscillianists, the anonymous Würzburg tractates (codex Mp. th. Q. 3 in the University Library at Würzburg, from the 5th or 6th centuries) being the most significant. Ibid., pp. 56, 62.

colored nearly every aspect of his thought, from his rigorous asceticism to his expansive notion of the canon which made its truth reside beyond the limits of the official texts.[195] The resemblance was more inadvertent than deliberate, the result of a shared passion for a universalism that located the divine in everything, but did not necessarily subscribe to the same fervent dualism that the Manichaeans espoused.[196] As Chadwick astutely observed, "These striking parallels do not add up to a demonstration that Priscillian is a crypto-Manichee. They show how genuinely vulnerable he is to orthodox anxieties about his position."[197]

The variety of Priscillianism that Leo encountered, however, was not the nuanced expression of ideas reflected in the Würzburg tractates and in the other extant writings of the sect. It was the adversarial and rhetorical version represented in the three documents sent by Turibius to Rome in early 447, which consisted of a personal letter addressed to Leo, a memorandum ('commonitorium') describing Priscillianist views, and a libel that aimed to refute them.[198] From this collection, of which only Leo's response remains, there emerges a deeply biased picture of the sect as encompassing not only the affinity to Manichaeism mentioned above, but also the Trinitarian error of Sabellius, the christological errors of Photinus, Paul of Samosata, and Arius,[199] the transmigration of souls that Origen embraced, and an unbending commitment to astrological fatalism, none of which can be confirmed by Priscillian texts.[200]

More significant than Leo's conventional response to each heretical view are the implicit connections between the refutations, which together reveal his underlying concern for situating an articulated theology of the human person at the center of a tempered cosmology.[201]

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[195] Ibid., pp. 98–99.

[196] Ibid., p. 99.

[197] Ibid. Yet it was enough to convince the secular authority that the Priscillians and Manichaeans were essentially the same. See Decret, "Du bon usage du mensonge et du parjure: Manichéens et Priscillianistes face à la persécution dans l'Empire chrétien (IV–V siècles)," pp. 115–124.

[198] Arranged in sixteen chapters, the 'commonitorium' that Turibius provided was probably one of the few documents known to Leo that explained the teachings of the sect, and for that reason he followed its outlines closely in responding to the bishop.

[199] Sabellius taught that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit were different modes of the one God. Photinus, Paul of Samosata, and Arius were accused of subscribing to the view that Christ was merely a man.

[200] The heretical labels were, nonetheless, confirmed at the First Council of Braga in 561.

[201] Burrus, *The Making of a Heretic*, p. 71.

The soul is not identical to God (contrary to what this version of Priscillianism and Manichaeism maintained) because a vast chasm of ontological distance separated the ultimate, unchangeable being of divinity from the contingent, mutable nature of everything that is part of creation.[202] As the *locus* of the passions, the soul was the place in the human person to which ascetic practice, for instance, was addressed.[203] Because the passions are subject to change, the soul that is their seat is not in its property unchangeable, but merely receives that quality as a gift. By greatly separating the ontological status of the human soul from the immutable nature of divinity, Leo followed a trajectory, beginning with the Trinitarian debates of the fourth century, that rejected the Middle and Neoplatonic hierarchical order of being in favor of a "communion of divinity and creation … imaginable only through the paradox of the Incarnation," as Burrus remarked.[204]

With the christological debates of the fifth century, what seemed like an insurmountable chasm of being was paradoxically diminished by insisting upon a Christ whose humanity was in nearly every respect a faithful reproduction of the vicissitudes of human frailty and expectation. Priscillianists, who were made to sound like docetists for rejecting the reality of the Incarnation, death, and Resurrection, like Arians for subjecting Christ to progress, like Paul of Samosata and Photinus for maintaining that Christ began in his mother's womb, like Manichaeans for refusing to admit the resurrection of the body, dangerously undermined the precarious juncture between the human and the divine that was the God-man Christ. The seemingly insurmountable chasm was also diminished by insisting upon a humanity that was capable of exercising the full possibility of freedom. Origen's commitment to the transmigration of souls, which Leo incorrectly attributed to the Priscillians, was surprisingly seen as attenuating the very basis for human responsibility that his idea was intended to preserve. Souls that existed prior to being inserted into bodies were thought to migrate from one body to the next according to the appropriate degree of moral culpability, thereby justifying the world as it was and each person's place in it.

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[202] Leo, *Ep.* 15.5, Jaffé 412. Leo's source was probably Augustine, *de Haeresibus*, 46.3, PL 42, 35.

[203] See generally Leo, *Ep.* 15.13, Jaffé 412. Although he does not make the explicit connection between the practice of asceticism and the quieting of the passions, the association was by this time a commonplace in ascetic theology.

[204] Burrus, *The Making of a Heretic*, p. 70.

True human freedom, so far as Leo was concerned, resided not in this unyielding doctrine of transmigration, but in the much more forgiving story of Adam's transgression that resulted in the Fall. Because all humanity was thereby tainted, only through the sacrament of the baptism instituted by Christ was humanity deemed capable of freedom. The sort of freedom that Leo imagined had nothing to do with imposing a static equality by which each person invariably experienced either the reward or punishment that the moral quality of his soul deserved. It had everything to do with imparting a fluid sense of grace that implicitly rendered everyone equal to the extent that she participated in the love of Christ.[205] Priscillianists, as Leo conceived them, undermined the dignity of the human person by their failure to extricate humanity convincingly from the deplorable conditions of its existence. Viewed in this light, their cosmological dualism, their rigorous asceticism, their reading of apocryphal books were only a byproduct of a theology of the person that completely subverted the story of the Fall and Christ's role in redemption. If humanity consisted in a soul that was divine, a body that did not resurrect, a capacity for moral responsibility that could be realized only in the context of the moral failings and achievements of an earlier life, then its transgressions were not truly redeemed, its suffering not overcome, and the vast ontological difference between creation and its creator would have been artificially and improperly diminished. The paradox that Leo intimated here, and later embraced at Chalcedon, was that this cosmological rupture between divinity and humanity, which had opened throughout the course of the Trinitarian debates in the fourth century and which his so-called Priscillianists inelegantly addressed in the fifth, would be mitigated only by acknowledging the human person in all its imperfection.

It should be clear by now that Leo's Priscillianists were a rhetorical construction that had little to do with the views of their founder.[206] The awkward temporal distance between the two was obliquely addressed even by Leo when he attributed the rise of the sect, some 60 years after Priscillian's execution, to the deteriorating political conditions that were

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[205] Leo, *Ep.* 15.10, Jaffé 412.

[206] On the inaccuracy of Leo's description, see R. van Dam, *Leadership and Community in Late Antique Gaul* (Berkeley, 1985), pp. 113–114; on the construction of Priscillianists as heretics by Vincent of Lérins and Orosius, see A. Ferreiro, "Simon Magus and Priscillian in the Commonitorium of Vincent of Lérins," *VC* 49 (1995), pp. 180–188 and E. Spät, "The *Commonitorium* of Orosius on the teachings of the Priscillianists," *Acta Antiqua Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 38, 4 (1998), pp. 357–379.

the result of the invasions. "Many provinces have been preoccupied with the enemy invasions," he remarked, "and the stormy wars have prevented the laws from being executed. Travel has become difficult among God's bishops and meetings rare; because of the general disorder, secret treachery runs rampant."[207] Surprisingly, the dismantling of the ecclesiastical and political organization that Leo reported was at least partly the consequence of the treaty that was negotiated (438) between the Gallaecians in the North and their political adversaries, the Suevi. It was a dubious peace that spared the Gallaecians and their neighbors from continuous wars, while unburdening the Suevi to pursue their conquests throughout the rest of Spain.[208] Although Leo was fully justified, therefore, in commenting upon the overall state of political disarray, his purpose in doing so underscored his deeper concern for the circumstances under which imperial authority might be legitimately coopted to serve the interests of the ecclesiastical establishment.[209] Because heresies such as Priscillianism (which in the later rhetorical construction remarked upon above were made to subscribe to a kind of astrological fatalism that undermined the agency of human responsibility) were thought to be treacherous not only to Christian belief but to the functioning of the legal system, the state's coercive power, as Leo saw it, should be used even as far as execution in order to complement the more gentle variety of spiritual correction that was the province of the church.[210] By imputing the rise of Priscillianists in Spain to the dismantling of its political organization, Leo both vindicated the general stability of an ecclesiastical hierarchy that had itself

[207] i.e., Leo answers the question, why are Priscillianists appearing now, so long after they were apparently removed by the state? Leo, *Ep.* 15, Intro., 21 July 447, *Quam laudabiliter pro*, Jaffé 412. 'Ex quo autem multas provincias hostilis occupavit irruptio, et executionem legum tempestates interclusere bellorum. Ex quo inter sacerdotes Dei difficiles commeatus et rari coeperunt esse conventus, invenit ob publicam perturbationem secreta perfidia libertatem.'

[208] As the Spanish bishop and chronicler from the late fifth century, Hydatius, put it, "The Suevi upheld a peace treaty with the region of the Gallaecian people with whom they were in conflict." Hydatius, *Continuatio Chronicorum Hieronymianorum, a. 468*, a. 438, 113. 'Suevi cum parte plebis Gallaeciae, cui adversabantur, pacis iura confirmant.' On the political situation of the Gallaecian provincials, see Muhlberger, *The Fifth-Century Chroniclers*, pp. 222, 250.

[209] On the relationship between secular and ecclesiastical authority in the Priscillianist controversy see generally A. Rousselle, "Quelques aspects politiques de l'affaire priscillianiste," *Revue des Études Anciennes* 83 (1981), pp. 85–96.

[210] Leo, *Ep.* 15, Intro., Jaffé 412.

been infiltrated by Priscillianists[211] and confirmed that the heresy was pernicious enough to justify the full panoply of state intervention. It wasn't the church's fault, in other words, that the heresy had reappeared.

Given the difficult political conditions that prevailed in Spain, the ecclesiastical hierarchy was the only viable disciplinary body, and Rome its most effective ally. Leo's reputation for having stamped out Manichaeism in Rome had, in fact, reached as far as Spain, where the chronicler Hydatius (d. c. 469) reported in his entry for the year 445 that "proceedings have been brought against the Manichaeans throughout the provinces by the bishop of Rome [i.e., Leo] who presided at that time."[212] It is not then surprising that Turibius chose Leo to eradicate what he and others construed to be a similar heresy from the region. Bishops from the Spanish diocese of Gallaecia, which included the provinces of Tarraco, Carthago, Lusitania, and Gallaecia, were ordered by Leo to convene a general synod, where they were to remove from communion any bishops who refused to condemn the heresy. ("What will the religion of the people be, what the salvation of the laity," he asked, "where, against the interests of human society, the holiness of purity is abolished, the marriage-vow destroyed, the propagation of children forbidden, the nature of the flesh condemned?")[213] In the light of the political unrest there, a general synod was not necessarily feasible. Leo, therefore, arranged for a provincial synod to be organized by his representatives, Idacius and Ceponius, working together with Turibius. Whether such a synod ever took place, or what its outcome may have been, is not certain. Hydatius reported an informal synod having occurred in 447, perhaps the same synod that the papal representatives arranged, where Leo's letter against the Priscillians was introduced to the Spanish bishops by Turibius' deacon, Pervincus, and to

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[211] The heresy appealed broadly to clergy and laity alike. See Leo, *Ep.* 15, Intro., Jaffé 412. '[…] etiam quorumdam sacerdotum corda corrupta sunt; et per quos opprimenda falsitas et defendenda veritas credebatur, per ipsos doctrinae Priscillianae evangelium subditur Christi…' [Priscillianism] "corrupted the hearts even of certain bishops; they who were thought to be the necessary suppressors of falsehood and champions of the truth are the same ones [who] subordinate the gospel of God to the teaching of Priscillian."

[212] Hydatius, *Continuatio Chronicorum Hieronymianorum*, a. 468, a. 445, 133. 'Per episcopum Romae tunc praesidentem gesta de Manichaeis per provincias diriguntur.'

[213] Leo, *Ep.* 15.17, Jaffé 412. 'Quae illic religio populi, quae salus plebis, ubi contra humanam societatem pudoris sanctitas tollitur, conjugiorum foedus aufertur, propagatio generationis inhibetur, carnis natura damnatur…?'

which only a few Gallaecians subscribed.[214] Although Roman intervention was welcome as far as Turibius and a few other catholic bishops were concerned, the Priscillianists were sufficiently established among the Spanish hierarchy that only some of its members were willing to condemn it.

4. *The vicariate of Illyricum*

While Rome contested with local ecclesiastical hierarchies in Gaul, North Africa, and Spain, its extension of papal hegemony in the prefecture of Illyricum (which included roughly the provinces of Dacia, Macedonia, and Greece)[215] was complicated by the long-standing geopolitical claims that the eastern and western emperors had made to the region.[216] As a fertile breeding ground for the most capable military men to serve the Roman army, Illyricum was the object of the *magister utriusque militiae* Stilicho's military designs even after the Eastern part of the region, which was defined by the boundaries of the civil dioceses of Dacia and Macedonia, had been transferred from Gratian to

[214] Hydatius, *Continuatio Chronicorum Hieronymianorum*, a. 468, a. 447, 135. 'huius scripta per episcopi Thoribi diaconem Pervincum contra Priscillianistas ad Hispanienses episcopos deferuntur. inter quae ad episcopum Thoribium de observatione catholicae fidei et de haeresium blasphemiis disputatio plena dirigitur, quae ab aliquibus Gallaecis subdolo probatur arbitrio.' Cited by Muhlberger, *The Fifth-Century Chroniclers*, p. 239. "[Leo's] writings against the Priscillians were brought to the Spanish bishops by Pervincus, the deacon of bishop Turibius. Included in his writings was a full discussion sent to Bishop Turibius concerning the observance of the catholic faith and the blasphemies [contained in] the heresies. This was approved by some of the Gallaecians with deceitful reservations." Leo's "writings against the Priscillians" was his letter to Turibius, the same *Ep.* 15 discussed here. The provincial synod would have included the priests of the province (and not the entire diocese) of Gallaecia. On the fluid boundary between laity and clergy that was a feature of Priscillianism, see M.C. Diaz Y Diaz, "L'expansion du christianisme et les tensions épiscopales dans la péninsule ibérique," *Miscellanea historiae ecclesiasticae* 6 (Brussells, 1983), pp. 84–94, esp. pp. 91–92.

[215] On the changing boundaries of the prefecture, especially in the fourth century, see e.g., J.R. Palanque, "Du nouveau sur la préfecture d'Illyricum au IV siècle," ed. J. Bibauw, *Hommages à M. Renard* (Brussells, 1969), pp. 600–606.

[216] On the military strategy of Magnentius and Constantius in their contest for the region, see e.g., J. Sasel, "The struggle between Magnentius and Constantius II for Italy and Illyricum," *Antiquité vivante* (1971) 21, pp. 205–216; for an historical narrative, see F.E. Wozniak, "East Rome, Ravenna and Western Illyricum 454–536 A.D.," *Historia* 30 (1981), pp. 351–382; and on its origins, see A.M. Malevantij, "The Formation of the Province of Illyricum," *Vestnik Drevnej/Journal of Ancient History* (1975) 131, pp. 138–144.

Theodosius I in 379.[217] Under the pressure of the barbarian invasions, and overwhelmed by a military "front that reached from western Hungary to the Black Sea," Gratian had no longer been able to administer militarily the entire prefecture.[218] Eight years later, after control of the region had passed from East to West and back again, its civil and military administration was to remain the responsibility of the East, its administrative center the city of Thessalonica, where the prefect in charge of governing the region resided.[219]

Transferring Illyricum's civil administration to the East did not settle the rivalry between East and West that was a continuing feature of its history, but merely shifted the *locus* of that rivalry to the ecclesiastical sphere. Theodosius II, for instance, in 421 issued a short-lived constitution to the praetorian prefect of Illyricum demanding that all ecclesiastical disputes arising there were to come under the jurisdiction of the patriarchate of Constantinople. (Honorius, under the direction of pope Boniface, swiftly persuaded him otherwise.)[220] To confirm that the eastern part of Illyricum retained its westward orientation in spite of such audacious claims to the contrary, Jalland observed that the affairs of that see were under the jurisdiction of the western synod of Aquileia in 381 and were administered as a vicariate of Rome from the time of pope Siricius (pope, 384–398).[221] Establishing a vicariate there merely confirmed that the region's westward orientation, no longer a settled feature of its ecclesiastical landscape, required the ongoing vigilance of someone whose actions were ostensibly equivalent to Rome's.[222]

Unlike the western provincial hierarchy, which was generally congenial to the theology (if not the disciplinary views) of Rome, the bishops of Illyricum, who as subjects of the Eastern administrative system were increasingly pulled into the orbit of the Constantinopolitan see,

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[217] Bury, vol. 1, p. 111.

[218] Maenchen-Helfen, *The World of the Huns*, p. 34. Regarding Theodosius' administering Illyricum as an eastern province, see Sozomen, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 7.4.

[219] On the division of the region between East and West, see E. Demougeot, "Le partage des provinces de l'Illyricum entre la pars Occidentis et la pars Orientis, de la Tétrarchie au règne de Théodoric," in *La géographie administrative et politique d'Alexandre à Mahomet. Actes du Colloque de Strasbourg 14–16 juin 1979* (Leiden, 1981), pp. 229–253; J. Fitz, "La division de l'Illyricum," *Latomus* 47 (1988), pp. 13–25.

[220] Jones, p. 889.

[221] Jalland, pp. 176, 192. Only the eastern part of Illyricum formed the territory of the vicariate.

[222] Because Leo continued to run the province as a Roman vicariate, its ecclesiastical administration is properly considered beside that of the western churches.

formed their doctrinal views independently. At Chalcedon, for instance, Atticus, the bishop of Nicopolis in Illyricum, did not think that Leo's *Tome* and the other letters adduced by the West were sufficient statements of the orthodox faith. He added to their list Cyril's third letter to Nestorius, which contained the controversial twelve anathemas that had fueled the christological debate in the two decades before.[223] Unmistakably, this letter was the product of an eastern mind, its phrases reminiscent of the single-nature doctrine of the Egyptian heretic, Apollinaris, its spirit contrary to the balanced two-nature language that was characteristic of the *Tome*.[224] That Atticus promoted such a letter suggests how greatly the orientation of Illyricum veered toward the East, even while Leo continued to assert the full panoply of papal rights there.

It was in the wake of the Hunnic invasions that Leo first corresponded with the province (January 444) in order to appoint Anastasius, the bishop of Thessalonica, as his vicar. Not a hint of the barbarian devastation that Marcellinus and Prosper described only a few years earlier can be detected. As we learn from Marcellinus in his entry for the year 441: "The kings of the Huns invaded Illyricum with many of their soldiers; Naissus, Singidunum, as well as other cities and many towns in Illyricum were destroyed"; and one year later (442), "the brothers Bleda and Attila, the kings of many peoples, plundered ('depopulati sunt') Illyricum and Thrace." For the same year (442) Prosper reported, "After the Huns ravaged Thrace and Illyricum with cruel devastation ('saeva depopulatio'), the army, which was staying in Sicily, returned to defend the eastern provinces."[225] That Leo knew about the problems in the region is suggested not only by his association with Prosper, but by the fact that he chose this difficult time to renew the special relationship between Rome and the province that had officially begun during the papacy of Siricius, when Anysius was its bishop.[226]

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[223] For more detail on this episode, see C. Pietri, "La géographie de l'Illyricum ecclésiastique et ses relations avec l'église de Rome (V–VI siècles)," *Villes et Peuplement dans l'Illyricum protobyzantin. Actes du Colloque organisé par l'École française de Rome* (Rome, 1984), pp. 31–35.

[224] See Jalland, p. 292, n. 19. Here the point is only that the letter reflects eastern tastes, not that it has no place alongside the *Tome*.

[225] Marcellinus *Comes*, *Marcellini v. c. comitis chronicon ad a. DXVIII continuatum ad a. DXXXIV*, a. 441, 3: 'Hunnorum reges numerosis suorum cum milibus Illyricum irruerunt: Naisum, Singidunum aliasque civitates oppidaque Illyrici plurima exciderunt.' Ibid. a. 442, 2. Prosper, *Epit. Chron.*, a. 442, 1346 (following the alternate reading: 'saeva depopulatione'). Maenchen-Helfen, *The World of the Huns*, p. 111.

[226] Leo, *Ep.* 5, 12 January 444, *Omnis admonitio*, Jaffé 403; *Ep.* 6, 12 January 444,

As in Gaul, North Africa, and among the catholic hierarchy in Spain, Illyricum was especially receptive to the authority of Rome at a time of political instability, and therefore willing, in theory at least, to accept the various conditions that being such a vicariate required.

Having requested formally that Leo acknowledge him as a vicar,[227] Anastasius, like his predecessors Anysius and Rufus, was expected to represent the interests of Leo to the extent that obeying him, Anastasius, was comparable to obeying Rome. In his capacity as a papal representative, he was to administer the churches of the region by permitting no concealment ('dissimulatio') or negligence ('negligentia') to occur.[228] Concealment was frequently associated with heresy and with all sorts of monetary crimes, and negligence with the general failure to impose ecclesiastical norms. Because the position of papal vicar was, as Leo saw it, a disciplinary extension of Rome, no one was to be consecrated bishop without consulting him first. Bishops were to be chosen for the full array of virtuous conduct that the canons imposed—for their excellent character, for their having married only once, for their general devotion to upholding ecclesiastical discipline, and never because of personal favor, canvassing for votes, or simony. As a kind of metropolitan of last resort, the vicar, who was situated at the top of the ecclesiastical hierarchy (the metropolitan and provincial bishops being fully subordinate to him), was responsible not only for overseeing episco-

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Omnium quidem litteras, Jaffé 404. Technically, Acholius was the first bishop of Illyricum to serve as a vicar of the apostolic see under pope Damasus. But Anysius (under popes Siricius and Innocent) may have been the first to serve according to a permanent arrangement, i.e., "according to the fixed plan" that Leo spoke of. After Anysius, Rufus served as vicar (under Innocent and Boniface). See *St. Leo the Great: Letters*, *Fathers of the Church* 34, ed. E. Hunt, (Washington, D.C., 1957), p. 28, n. 1.

[227] This does not mean that Anastasius initiated the contact with Leo, only that he agreed formally to serve as his vicar. See Leo, *Ep.* 6.2, Jaffé 404.

[228] See for example ibid. '… nostra adhortatione compellimus ut nulla dissimulatio, negligentia nulla proveniat circa ecclesiarum regimen per Illyricum positarum, quas dilectioni tuae vice nostra committimus, beatae recordationis Siricii exemplum secuti … ut per illam provinciam positis, quas ad disciplinam teneri voluit, ecclesiis subveniret … Imitatorem te tam praedecessoris tui quam decessoris … esse volumus … ut de profectu ecclesiarum quas tibi vice nostra committimus, gaudeamus.' "By our admonition we oblige you to permit no dissembling, no negligence, to occur in the governing of the churches situated throughout Illyricum, which we entrust to your beloved in our stead, following the example of Siricius of blessed memory… He was to assist the churches situated in that province, which he wanted kept in line… We want you to be an imitator of your predecessor and his predecessor … that we may rejoice in the progress of the churches that we entrust to you in our stead."

pal consecrations but for personally consecrating the metropolitans.[229] More generally, he was to enforce the ecclesiastical law by ensuring that synods were held frequently, the bishops and clergy being expected to attend especially those meetings that addressed matters of church discipline. Cases that could not be resolved locally, as well as any appeals filed with Rome, were to be reserved for the deliberation of the apostolic see.[230] Leo had made similar arrangements with the metropolitans of Gaul and North Africa, who were encouraged to send their most difficult cases to Rome. With this set of procedural and administrative guidelines, Leo imposed the steeply hierarchical vision of ecclesiastical order that he thought was needed to facilitate Rome's continuing influence in a region whose civil administration had been transferred permanently to the eastern sphere.

Only two years later (6 January 446), the situation in Illyricum failed to meet Leo's expectations for a papal vicariate.[231] Although the metropolitan bishops in the region had ostensibly accepted the authority of Anastasius, Leo was disturbed by their ongoing legal infractions: bishops were being consecrated irregularly, without the consent of the clergy and the people that was a continuing requirement of the canons from at least the time of Caelestine;[232] bishops were ordaining clergy from outside their diocese in violation of canons 18 and 19 from the Council of Sardica and of canon 15 from the Council of Nicaea, which prohibited bishops, presbyters, and clergy from moving from city to city;[233] and the threshold for ecclesiastical appeals he devised was ignored when several bishops failed to send their unresolved cases

[229] Ibid. *Ep.* 6.4. 'Singulis autem metropolitanis sicut potestas ista committitur, ut in suis provinciis ius habeant ordinandi, ita eos metropolitanos a te volumus ordinari, maturo tamen et decoro judicio.' (For 'decoro' I follow the alternate reading.) "Just as that power of having the right to consecrate in their own province is granted to individual metropolitans, so do we want those metropolitans to be consecrated by you, though only after a mature and appropriate judgment."

[230] Ibid. *Ep.* 6.5. 'Si qua vero causa major evenerit, quae a tua fraternitate illic praesidente non potuerit definiri, relatio tua missa nos consulat.' "If some major case arises that cannot be settled there under your Brotherhood's direction, consult us by sending your report."

[231] Leo, *Ep.* 13, 6 January 446, *Grato animo epistolas*, Jaffé 409. For a narrative of the difficulties, see Pietri, "La géographie de l'Illyricum ecclésiastique et ses relations avec l'Église de Rome (V–VI siècles)," pp. 21–62, esp. pp. 24–34.

[232] Here, Leo follows the guidelines of pope Caelestine.

[233] See the Council of Nicaea, c. 15, Mansi, 2.681–682, and the Council of Sardica, c. 18, 19, Mansi, 3.29–30, 378: "Let no bishop be allowed to gain for himself a minister in the church of a bishop of another city and ordain him to one of his own parishes."

to Rome. Leo must have viewed such deviations from the canons as evidence that the region was not functioning as the papal fiefdom he envisioned. Anastasius also threatened this plan by exceeding the disciplinary authority delegated to him. Atticus, the metropolitan bishop of old Epirus, traveled with an embassy to Rome[234] where he complained of having been dragged from the entrance of his church by secular officials at the urging of Anastasius, for reasons he could not surmise.[235] Suffering from ill health, Atticus had apparently failed to respond immediately to a summons from Anastasius demanding his attendance at a provincial synod. In making that demand, Anatasius may have intended merely to enforce the wishes of Leo, who had recently urged the bishops to insist that the clergy attend such meetings. It was to punish Atticus for his absence, therefore, that Anastasius ordered the prefect of Illyricum to send public officials forcibly to detain him. Weak from illness and trudging through pathless snow, Atticus journeyed to Thessalonica during the harsh conditions of winter, where Anastasius made him profess, in writing, his obedience to the papal vicariate. Far from applauding this ruthless disciplinary action, Leo saw the episode as an appalling affront to Atticus, who had already shown his obedience to the vicariate merely by making the arduous journey there.

That Anastasius had been given formally the rights and power of a papal vicar implied that his actions were an extension of the power and authority of Rome. His harsh treatment of Atticus, therefore, compromised Leo's integrity as much as his own: "If you had little concern for your own esteem, you should at least have spared my reputation, lest what had been done only by your own heart should seem to have been done with our approval."[236] In theory, action taken by Anastasius was not necessarily identical to action taken by Rome, because a papal vicar was to share in the responsibility of Rome, but not in its plenary powers.[237] While the vicar certainly facilitated the expansion of Roman hegemony, his actions, no matter how they might have been

[234] Leo, *Ep.* 14.1, 6 January 446 (?), *Quanta fraternitati*, Jaffé 411.

[235] The story that Atticus told was confirmed by several bishops from his own province together with deacons who served under Anastasius, all of whom had accompanied Atticus to Rome.

[236] Ibid. 'Qui si tuae existimationis parum diligens eras, meae saltem famae parcere debuisti … ne quae tuo tantum facta sunt animo, nostro viderentur gesta judicio.'

[237] Ibid. 'Vices enim nostras ita tuae credidimus charitati, ut in partem sis vocatus sollicitudinis, non in plenitudinem potestatis'. "We entrusted our office to your charity only to the extent that you are invited [to partake] in our caregiving, not in the fullness of our power."

perceived by his clergy and people, were legitimate only to the extent that they were consistent with the interests of the apostolic see. The practical expression of this overarching principle meant that Anastasius, in his circumscribed role as vicar, was to consult with Leo before imposing disciplinary measures. I have already suggested that the see of Arles inadvertently expressed ambivalence toward Rome, both craving its recognition and fearing its powers. That same ambivalence can be found here in Anastasius, who both relished his role as vicar, and yet compromised it by failing to abide by its boundaries, as well as in Leo himself, whose unrelenting commitment to a legally circumscribed hierarchy undermined a relationship that may have thrived by ascribing to it a degree of autonomy.

Given Leo's commitment to curtailing the actions of the vicariate, it should come as no surprise that he used this opportunity to specify nearly every aspect of its administration: the rights of metropolitan bishops established in ancient times were to be observed under the vicariate of Anastasius; laymen, neophytes, and husbands of a second wife or of a widow were not eligible to be elected bishop; continence was required even of subdeacons ineligible for the bishopric; bishops were to be chosen by the consent of the clergy and people; metropolitan bishops were to be approved by the vicar; translation of bishops from one see to another was prohibited; bishops were not to receive clergy from another diocese; they were to hold provincial councils twice a year; when the vicar called a meeting of bishops, two from each province would suffice; and when the opinion of the vicar differed from that of the bishops, then they were to consult with Rome.[238] This long list of canons suggests how unyielding Leo's determination was to bring Illyricum into the orbit of the apostolic see, yet how little confidence he had that its bishops understood the legal temperament of Rome. They required, in other words, the detailed guidance that Leo provided.

The bishops in their canonical imprecision and Anastasius in his zeal for disciplinary austerity did not necessarily intend to be subver-

[238] For a discussion of these canonical laws, see Chapter 2.2. This is the last we hear of Illyricum from Leo until October 449, when he congratulated his vicar for failing to attend the controversial Robber Synod, the Council of Ephesus II that was later overturned at Chalcedon, and then again in 457, when he addressed a circular to Exitheus, the new bishop of Thessalonica, encouraging him to support a new council. His earlier (452) letter to Leo asking whether he should subscribe to Chalcedon apparently went unanswered. Pietri, "La géographie de l'Illyricum ecclésiastique et ses relations avec l'Église de Rome (V–VI siècles)," p. 35.

sive, because they never attempted to establish a separate identity. That all their actions were conducted in the name of a Roman ideal that they themselves did not perfectly embody was precisely what Leo found so threatening. Like the provincial churches of the West, the vicariate of Illyricum during a time of political instability looked toward Rome as the final arbiter of justice and ecclesiastical law, and as the source of its authority over the churches in the region. No matter how many legal rulings Rome issued, the reality of its eastern orientation eventually made the vicariate in Thessalonica more receptive to the influence of the Constantinopolitan see. Its status as a papal vicariate officially ended twenty years later when the bishops of Illyricum succumbed to the lure of the East by supporting Acacius, the bishop of Constantinople, the successor of Anatolius whom pope Felix III (pope, 483–492) excommunicated for holding doctrinal views that were contrary to Rome's.[239]

5. *Persecution and discipline in Italy*

The extension of papal hegemony throughout the region of southern Italy, including the islands of Sicily, Corsica, and Sardinia, was virtually a foregone conclusion. It was here, in his district, that Leo exercised the rights and privileges of a metropolitan bishop and that his authority was generally unquestioned. The most visible consequence of this willing submission to papal leadership was the action taken against the Manichaeans, whose adherents had fled to Rome and established new communities there, following the conquest of Carthage by the Vandals in 439.[240] These were the heretics who, as Leo saw them,

[239] Jalland, p. 191. Pietri suggests, however, that the vicariate ended under Leo, when Exitheus, the new bishop of Thessalonica who was once eager to consult with Rome, was no longer its ready ally after the assassination of Proterius of Alexandria in 457. "La géographie de l'Illyricum ecclésiastique et ses relations avec l'Église de Rome (V–VI siècles)," p. 35. On the history of papal relations with the region, see generally the letter collection edited by C. Silva-Tarouca, *Epistularum Romanorum pontificium ad vicarios per Illyricum aliosque episcopos collectio Thessalonicensis: ad fidem codicis Vat. Lat. 5751* (Rome, 1937).

[240] Leo, *Serm.* 16.5, 12 December 443, *Sublimitas quidem*; *Ep.* 7.1, Jaffé 405. On Leo's assessment of the Manichaean situation in Rome, see generally *Serm.* 16, 12 December 443; *Serm.* 24, 443, *Semper quidem*; *Serm.* 34, 444, *Iustum et rationabile*; *Serm.* 42, 12 March 444, *Praedicaturus vobis*; *Serm.* 76, 2 June 444, *Plenissime quidem nobis*; *Serm.* 9, July 444, *Misericordia*; *Ep.* 7, Jaffé 405; *Ep.* 15, Jaffé 412, and the Constitution of Valentinian, 19 June 445. For a comparison of Manichaeism in Rome and Carthage, see F. Decret,

rejected the Old Testament, including the Psalms of David and the law of Moses; rewrote parts of the New Testament, and introduced apocryphal gospels;[241] embraced a cosmological dualism that regarded the body of Christ as docetic and the Holy Spirit as having appeared in their teacher Manes;[242] and practiced a rigorous form of fasting to honor the sun, the moon, and the stars.[243] Because all these points find parallels in, among other places, the *de Haeresibus* of Augustine,[244] and are confirmed throughout the *corpus* of texts composed by the Manichaeans, it is difficult to say what Leo personally knew about the sect and what he learned simply from having read Augustine.[245] The most likely scenario was that he heard rumors about the so-called errant beliefs and deviant rituals[246] of a sect that was becoming firmly ensconced in Rome, rumors that he corroborated by studying the polemical tractates against them, and reinforced by repeating what he found throughout his sermons and letters.[247]

"Le Manichéisme présentait-il en Afrique et à Rome des particularismes régionaux distinctifs?" *Augustinianum* 34 (1994), pp. 5–40.

[241] Leo, *Serm.* 9.4, July 444; *Serm.* 34.4(2), 444.

[242] Leo, *Serm.* 9.4, 24.4, 34.4, 76.6. Leo knew that Mani was the founder of the sect and thought that he was executed in 277, when Caesar M. Aurelius Probus Augustus and Paulinus were consuls. Mani was, in fact, executed around this time (14 or 28 February 276 or 26 February 277) by the Sassanidian king, Bahram I, in the Babylonian city of Gundeshapur. On this and the imprecision of Leo's dates, see eds. H.G. Schipper, J. van Oort, *Sermons and Letters against the Manichaeans: selected fragments: St. Leo the Great* (Turnhout, 2000), pp. 90–91.

[243] Leo, *Serm.* 42.4–5, 12 March 444.

[244] Augustine, *de Haeresibus*, 46, PL 42, 34–38.

[245] A. Lauras, "Saint Léon le Grand et le Manicheisme Romain," *SP* 11 (1972), pp. 204. Leo's polemic against the Manichaeans will be addressed in the context of his christology in Chapter 4, below.

[246] Leo, *Serm.* 16.4, 12 December 443. Leo disparaged the Manichaeans for their obscene and secret ceremonial rites.

[247] For the relationship between Leo's and Augustine's portrayal of the Manichaeans, see Lauras, "Saint Léon le Grand et le Manicheisme Romain," pp. 203–209. Note that Leo used the same word 'exsecramentum' to describe the heresy (*Serm.* 16.4 and *Serm.* 76.7) that Augustine had used in his *De haeresibus*, 46, PL 42, 36. Lauras suggests that Leo's scriptural documentation does not come from reading the typical anti-Manichaean treatises, but from the texts that may have been used by the accused during the Roman trial. This view should be qualified by that of Schipper and Van Oort, who have shown that Leo relied on Augustine for his treatment of Manichaean views on abstinence, astrology, Scripture, dualism, and anthropology. eds. Schipper, Van Oort, *Sermons and Letters against the Manichaeans*, pp. 9–12. Before Leo, in addition to Augustine, Filaster of Brescia, Ambrose of Milan, Evodius of Uzali, Quodvultdeus of Carthage, Prosper of Aquitaine, and Orosius of Braga, wrote against the sect. Ibid., pp. 9–18.

One particularly odious rumor came to Leo's attention toward the end of 443, in which it was alleged that a ten-year-old girl had been raped by a young man under the direction of a Manichaean bishop and with the approval of two women who had raised the girl expressly for the ritual. Nothing else is known about the incident because the details were said to be too shocking to reveal publicly.[248] To avoid the impression that he merely repeated an unsubstantiated rumor and, therefore, unfairly persecuted the sect, Leo ordered an investigation ('inquisitio'), in which the ecclesiastical and secular authorities, including bishops, presbyters, and nobles, were present in a trial conducted before the Roman senate ('per publicos judices').[249] It was by the order of the senate that the Manichaeans were condemned and "banished to permanent exile ('relegati perpetuo exsilio')." That this was the first time the senatorial body had been used for such a purpose in ages confirms that Leo did not, in this early stage of his papacy, occupy a power void in Rome. He rather exploited the same connections with its aristocratic families that had facilitated his diplomatic mission to Gaul in 440, when he was still a deacon.[250] Because Manichaeism had already been made a crime by Theodosius I, who forbade its members from transferring their property to the sect and prohibited them from gathering, Leo was fully justified in orchestrating this collaboration between the ecclesiastical and secular spheres.[251] As opportunistic as the alliance was, in other words, it was made even more clever by the fact that the collaboration could be, and in fact was, interpreted as merely upholding a well-settled imperial law. Nor was this the first time that the ecclesiastical and secular authority cooperated in order to root out those thought to be heretics and, therefore, threatening to the state.[252] Nestorius, the bishop of Constantinople, had, upon his election in 430, promised Theodo-

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[248] Leo, *Serm.* 16.4, 12 December 443. For more details, the listeners are referred to the acts of the trial, which are no longer extant.

[249] Ibid. '… ne quisquam putet nos de hac re dubiae famae et incertis opinionibus credidisse.' "so that no one might think that [he] had believed dubious reports and questionable rumors."

[250] Leo, *Ep.* 7.1, Jaffé 405; Lepelley, "Saint Léon le Grand et la cité Romain," p. 142.

[251] *CTh*, 16.7.3, 383.

[252] Nor was this the first time that a pope persecuted the sect. Pope Siricius sent the Manichaeans he discovered into exile and readmitted to communion converts from the sect only upon their death, while pope Anastasius required five bishops to confirm the orthodoxy of any cleric from overseas who sought ordination. See S.N.C. Lieu, *Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire and Medieval China. A Historical Survey* (Manchester, 1985), pp. 164–165; Lepelley, "Saint Léon le Grand et la cité Romain," p. 138.

sius II that he would eliminate from that city all its heretics, which at that time consisted of certain descendants of the Arians, the Macedonians, and other dissident sects.

This alliance with the secular sphere was further enhanced by a collaboration with the bishops, who were urged to "track them down" to ensure that Manichaeans were not living concealed, somewhere in their jurisdiction.[253] Even the laity was asked to expose their hiding places,[254] by which was implied not only the dark alleys and secret sanctuaries that such a description conjured, but the same churches in which the orthodox worshipped and where Manichaeans, concealed among them, participated in the eucharist. Their true identity as heretics was said to be revealed to Leo's vigilant detectives by their refusal to drink the sacramental wine, which according to their divinely-infused portrait of a dualist world was inhabited by dark elements that reinfected the believer with ignorance.[255] Together the ecclesiastical hierarchy and laity served as Leo's eyes and ears. An "ecclesiology of surveillance," as Maiers put it aptly, relied upon rumor and innuendo to extend the sphere of papal influence from the light of day to the hidden places that this new cadre of ecclesiastical spies inhabited.[256] More "hidden" than the Manichaeans were these secret channels of communication that Leo devised to unearth them.

For this extension of power among the laity to be perceived as legitimate, Leo orchestrated the public spectacle that was the trial before the Roman senate already mentioned, where the Manichaeans' disreputable ritual practices and heretical views were displayed openly for everyone to ridicule.[257] Through such a public demonstration, the accusations against them were transformed from the veil of unsubstantiated

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[253] Leo, *Ep.* 7.2, Jaffé 405. "that you be alert in investigating them." 'ut… vigiletis ad investigandos eos…'

[254] Leo, *Serm.* 9.4, July 444. 'Magna est enim pietas prodere latebras impiorum, et ipsum in eis, cui serviunt, diabolum debellare.' "It would be a great act of piety to reveal the hiding places of the ungodly [i.e., Manichaeans] and to vanquish in them the devil himself whom they serve."

[255] eds. Gardner, Lieu, *Manichaean Texts from the Roman Empire* (Cambridge, 2004), p. 22; Leo, *Serm.* 42.5, 12 March 444.

[256] H.O. Maier, "'Manichee!': Leo the Great the Orthodox Panopticon," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 4 (1996), p. 455.

[257] Leo, *Ep.* 7.1, Jaffé 405. 'Et omnia quae tam in Scripturis quam in occultis traditionibus suis habent profana vel turpia, ut nosset populus quid refugeret aut vitaret, oculis Christianae plebis certa manifestatione probavimus.' "All the unholy and shameful things that are found both in their scriptures and in their secret traditions, we have clearly proven before the eyes of the Christian laity that the people might know what to

rumor into the semblance of verified fact. It was only 'the semblance of fact' because the circumstances of the trial make the accuracy of its findings doubtful. Though Leo said that the accused had admitted to the charges against them,[258] there is no indication that a fair process was followed, or that coercion might be an improper means by which to secure an orthodox confession. Leo himself boasted that his "authority and judgment coerced them ('auctoritas et censura coercuit')" to sign a document that condemned the teachings of Mani and to repeat that condemnation publicly in a church confession.[259] Because his authority had been so effectively linked to the imperial power, the coercion that he wielded was the threat of punishment "according to the constitutions of the Christian rulers" ('secundum Christianorum principum constituta'). With the ecclesiastical, the senatorial, and the imperial powers allied against them, therefore, the Manichaeans were probably intimidated into confessing the crimes they were charged with. That Augustine described a similar trial having taken place in Carthage, where two young girls were said to have been sexually abused during a Manichaean ritual,[260] further complicates the matter. It is difficult to know whether Leo staged his trial before the senate in order to bring about the same result that Augustine reported, or whether the existence of two similar reports confirms the accuracy of each. The Manichaeans' commitment to purifying the body from the influx of evil through food and the senses[261] combined with their abhorrence of sexual activity among the elect[262] further undermines the accuracy of the moral charges against them.

There is no doubt that Leo was successful in persecuting the sect on at least two levels, that of rhetoric and idea, on the one hand, and that of cold, hard fact, on the other. His "ecclesiology of surveillance" was, according to Prosper, a method for ferreting out heretics

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shun or avoid." The record of these proceedings Leo circulated to all the bishops in the provinces of Italy.

[258] Leo, *Serm.* 16.4, 12 December 443. 'Qui cum de perversitate dogmatis sui et de festivitatum suarum consuetudine multa reserassent, illud quoque scelus, quod eloqui verecundum est, prodiderunt…' "Once they had revealed much about the perversity of their doctrine and the practices at their festivals, that crime, which is shameful even to speak of, was brought to light."

[259] Leo, *Ep.* 7.1, 30 January 444, *In consortium vos*, Jaffé 405.

[260] Augustine, *de Haeresibus*, 46.9, PL 42, 36.

[261] J. BeDuhn, *The Manichaean Body: in Discipline and Ritual* (Baltimore, 2000), p. 102.

[262] *Kephalaion* 80, 193.3–193.22, eds. A. Böhlig, H.J. Polotsky, W.-P. Funk, *Kephalaia*, (Stuttgart, 1940ff.)

that extended well beyond his metropolitan district and into the eastern empire, where a broader network of ecclesiastical spies developed. The accuracy of Prosper's report is obliquely confirmed by Theodoret of Cyrrhus, for instance, who in congratulating Leo for his zealous persecution of Manichaeans "might have benefited from the information about the sect which was extracted by Leo's inquisitors in his effort to combat the sect in his own diocese," as Lieu surmised.[263] This idea that Leo spread so effectively also had practical consequences for Manichaeans who, as Prosper reports in 443, were, in fact, found within the city walls. Their rituals and teachings were published before a Christian community that ridiculed them, their unrepentant followers condemned, their books burned.[264]

Troubles for the sect did not end there. Less than two years (19 June 445) after their public trial before the senate, Valentinian made the penalty for subscribing to Manichaeism even more severe than it had been under prior law.[265] Followers of the sect were to be expelled from the city and the army, and their rights as Roman citizens were to be rescinded. Being deprived of their rights meant that those convicted of the heresy were unable to receive or bequeath inheritances; they were prohibited from filing legal actions for personal torts; they were prevented from being a party to legal contracts; and their property was confiscated to the imperial fisc. In spite of the alliance of the secular and ecclesiastical powers against them, Manichaeans continued to survive, though in reduced numbers and under the continuous threat of persecution, well into the fifth and sixth centuries. Popes Gelasius (492–496) and Symmachus (498–514), supported in their efforts by this and other imperial laws and following the example of Leo, sent the

[263] Lieu, *Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire*, p. 166.

[264] Prosper, *Epit. Chron.*, a. 443, 1350. 'Hoc tempore plurimos Manicheos intra urbem latere diligentiae papae Leonis innotuit, qui eos de secretis suis erutos et oculis totius ecclesiae publicatos omnes dogmatis sui turpitudines et damnare fecit et prodere incensis eorum codicibus, quorum magnae moles fuerant interceptae.' "During this time it became known, thanks to the diligence of pope Leo, that several Manichaeans were hiding within the [city] walls. Leo rooted out their secrets and publicized all the obscenities of their doctrine before the eyes of all the church and made them condemn and hand over their books which were burned, the great bulk of which was intercepted."

[265] Valentinian accepted the trial held in Leo's court ('in iudicio') as legitimate and made it the basis for the imperial laws that he promulgated. See also Lepelley, "Saint Léon le Grand et la cité Romain," pp. 143–144. Lepelley suggests that in approving the decision of the pope, the emperor and the senate implicitly gave him the right to control the religious life of the Romans.

Manichaeans they discovered in Rome into exile and burned their books, while Pope Hormisdas (514–523) added to these punishments the pain and indignity of torture.[266]

A number of disciplinary matters that had arisen among the churches of southern and central Italy were also addressed by Leo. Together their resolution reveals his commitment to implementing and enforcing a uniform set of canons that imposed a view of ecclesiastical discipline, rooted in a deeper sense of justice, that facilitated order and stability within the hierarchy. This was a departure from a secular model of government that ascribed a measure of autonomy to the provinces and that tolerated a provincial legal system whose details differed sometimes from the central administration.

The social status of persons who had recently been ordained in the southern provinces of Campania, Picenum, and Etrurua concerned Leo greatly.[267] Slaves had been ordained into the priesthood. Two factors troubled Leo: first, that admitting persons of such low status threatened "the genuine body of the church ('sincerum corpus ecclesiae')," and second, that it upset the rights of masters by unlawfully removing from them their legal possessions. Given his impending collaboration with the secular powers, it is not surprising that ecclesiastical practice was not, in this case, permitted to undermine the property laws. Because their legal obligation to serve another might interfere with their duties to the church, not only slaves but serfs ('originales conditiones') as well were not to receive ordination.[268] Another recurring problem was the marital history of men seeking ordination to the priesthood. Leo considered this such a vexing issue for his district that he exercised his full rights as a metropolitan in order to resolve it: "Therefore, while we especially claim for ourself the responsibility of this investigation, we apply such mercy that if some mistakes have, perhaps, been committed in these matters, they may be corrected and not be allowed to happen again."[269] Such a direct intervention into the daily administration of the provincial churches was unusual for Leo, who generally

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[266] *Liber Pontificalis*, Gelasius 51, Hormisdas 54. L. Duchesne, *Liber Pontificalis* (Paris, 1886), pp. 255, 269–272.

[267] Leo, *Ep.* 4, 10 October 443, *Ut nobis gratulationem*, Jaffé 402.

[268] The terms more commonly used were 'originarius' and 'colonaria conditio'. ed. Hunt, *St. Leo the Great*, p. 24, n. 3; Leo, *Ep.* 4.1, Jaffé 402.

[269] Leo, *Ep.* 4.2, Jaffé 402. 'huius ergo discussionis curam nobis specialiter vindicantes ita misericordiam irrogamus, ut, si qua forsitan de his commissa sunt, corrigantur nec talia liceat ultra committi.'

preferred to leave the resolution of local matters such as these to the bishop in whose district the problem had arisen. But excluding from the priesthood men who had married a widow or had been married twice was sufficiently important to the moral authority of the church that he personally oversaw the ecclesiastical process by which such men were removed from office.[270]

A number of financial abuses had also come to Leo's attention, in which members of the laity and clergy, "ensnared by their greed for ill-gotten gains," had loaned money, charging interest.[271] Those convicted of committing such an ecclesiastical offense were to be punished severely, a decree that was generally consistent with the Councils of Nicaea, Arles, Laodicea, and Carthage (419). Before Leo, only the Council of Elvira in 305/6 (c. 20) had excommunicated laymen who continued to charge interest on their loans after having been reprimanded for the practice.[272] To those who wished to earn interest in the name of another, he issued the preemptive warning (something he rarely did) that such monetary gains were considered to be similarly improper. Anyone in the provinces of southern Italy who violated these decrees was to be punished without the possibility of later being pardoned. Another type of monetary crime had been committed by the bishops of Taormina and Palermo in the province of Sicily: they had made their congregations destitute by selling, giving away, and otherwise disposing of property belonging to the church. "The clergy of the church in Taormina deplored the destitution they were in when their bishop squandered all their estates… and the clergy of Palermo lodged a similar complaint (in a holy synod over which we presided) against its bishop for seizing property illegally," Leo said.[273] He forbade such behavior by decreeing that no church property be sold unless the entire

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[270] To support such a strict rule, Leo adduced evidence from the first letter of Timothy (1 Tim. 3:2), which said, "A man of one wife," and from the law code of Leviticus (21:14), which said, "A priest is not to marry a widow or a rejected wife, but a virgin," (as we shall see in Chapter 3.2).

[271] The ecclesiastical crime was usury ('usura'). At this time, Roman secular law permitted that interest be charged on loans.

[272] Council of Nicaea, c. 17, Mansi, 2.682; Council of Arles, c. 12, Mansi, 2.473; Council of Laodicea, c. 4, Mansi, 2.564–565; Council of Carthage (419), c. 5, Munier, *Concilia Africae*, *CCSL* 149, p. 102; Council of Elvira, c. 20.

[273] Leo, *Ep.* 17, 21 October 447, *Occasio specialium*, Jaffé 415. 'Taurominitanis enim clericis ecclesiae deplorantibus nuditatem, eo quod omnia eius praedia … episcopus dissiparet; etiam Panormitani clerici … similem querimoniam in sancta synodo, cui praesidebamus, de usurpatione prioris episcopi detulerunt.'

clergy agreed that doing so would profit the congregation. Both sets of financial decrees implicitly made the secular and biblical laws against theft, as well as the biblical injunction against usury (Deut. 23:29; Ex. 22:25; Luke 6:34), the foundation for norms of ecclesiastical conduct.

Novel practices that violated the custom ('consuetudo') of the Apostolic Constitutions and the example of Peter[274] were, as Leo saw it, being introduced among the bishops in Sicily. They were performing baptisms on the Epiphany,[275] the day on which Christ was adored by the Magi, rather than during the Easter season, as Rome expected them to do: "I am surprised that you or your predecessors could have landed upon an innovation so irrational as to confound the mysteries of the two festivals and believe that there was no difference between the day on which Christ was worshipped by the wise men and that on which he rose from the dead."[276] That not only the bishops of Sicily but many of the western and eastern churches performed baptisms on the Epiphany suggests that Leo attempted to impose a practice, which had been generally confined to Rome, more widely.[277] Further support that *his* view was, in fact, the innovation, is adduced by an argument from silence: prior to Leo, the practice is mentioned only in a letter of pope Siricius (pope, 384–399)[278] and, after Leo, in canon four of the Council of Gerunda.[279] Twelve years later (459) a similar practice seems to have continued in the provinces of Campania, Samnium, and Picenum, whose bishops Leo admonished for having performed baptisms on the ordinary saints' days, rather than the prescribed days of Easter and Pentecost.[280] The rite of baptism was construed as being theologically linked to Christ's death and resurrection, its power and effectiveness having been acquired through him in order to establish a new creature out of the old. Even the form of the rite had symbolic significance, for, as Leo put it, death was equated with the slaying of sin, the triple immersion imitated the three days of burial, and rising from

[274] who had baptized three thousand people on the day of Pentecost.
[275] This was apparently the norm in Syria.
[276] Leo, *Ep.* 16, 21 October 447, *Divinis praeceptis et*, Jaffé 414.
[277] NPNF, vol. 12, p. 27, n. 9.
[278] Siricius, 10 February 385, *Directa ad decessorem*, Jaffé 255, Mansi, 3.656.
[279] Council of Gerunda, c. 4; Mansi, 8.549. ed. Hunt, *St. Leo the Great*, p. 76, n. 28.
[280] Leo, *Ep.* 168, 6 March 459, *Magna indignatione*, Jaffé 545. With regard to penitence, Leo urged that Christians be permitted to make their confessions to a priest in private. They were not required to confess their sins publicly for fear that some might be intimidated and refuse to confess at all. Leo, *Ep.* 17.

the water represented Christ's rising from the tomb.[281] Because baptism was related to the death and resurrection, it was to be performed on only two occasions, either during the Easter season, or on the feast of Pentecost, which Leo understood as "the sequel and completion of the Paschal festival."[282] To uphold this set of disciplinary decrees, three bishops from Sicily were to convene in a yearly council held in Rome at which they were to deliberate on matters that, if left unchecked, might lead to divergence from Roman practice, or as Leo put it more rhetorically, to "scandal and heresy" ('scandala [et] errores'). While the Apostolic Constitution (c. 36), the Council of Nicaea (c. 5), and the Council of Antioch I (c. 20) had already said that the bishops of a district were to convene twice yearly to resolve any ecclesiastical controversies that may have arisen, Leo reserved for himself greater authority than these councils decreed by insisting that the bishops of Sicily convene in Rome, where he could presumably monitor their discussions.[283]

The ecclesiastical hierarchy of Beneventum, whose bishop, Dorus, had been consecrated by Leo himself, was apparently disrupted in early 448 by the political intrigues of certain presbyters.[284] A junior presbyter named Epicarpus had been promoted ahead of those more senior in rank. One of those whom he displaced, a priest named Paul, wrote to Leo, seeking restitution. "We have found out," said Leo, "from the complaint of your priest, Paul (which is attached to this letter), that the priestly order has been disturbed by novel ambition and detestable collusion."[285] Together with those who had acquiesced in his plan, Epicarpus, for having advanced through the ranks unfairly, was to be demoted to the very bottom of the hierarchy.[286] Presbyters being promoted unjustly must have alerted Leo to the possibility that

[281] Leo, *Ep.* 16.3, Jaffé 414.

[282] Ibid., lit: "it was attached to the Paschal festival as an appendage ('de paschalis festi pendet articulo')."

[283] Mansi, 1.35; 2.679, 1326; ed. Hunt, *St. Leo the Great*, p. 64.

[284] Leo, *Ep.* 19, 8 March 448, *Iudicium, quod de te*, Jaffé 417.

[285] Leo, *Ep.* 19, Jaffé 419. 'Libello etenim Pauli presbyteri tui, qui in subditis habetur, cognovimus, apud te novo ambitu foedoque colludio presbyterii ordinem fuisse turbatum.'

[286] Leo, *Ep.* 19.1–2, Jaffé 419. "But if, as it is claimed, those priests who are first and second in rank approved so strongly of having Epicarpus placed above them that they asked to have him honored at the expense of their own dignity, then this request should certainly not have been granted to men who by their own judgment were ousting themselves… [They are to be] considered last in rank among all the priests of the church; and that they may bear their own judgment, they are to be inferior in rank even to the man whom they, by their own sentence, preferred to themselves."

a political faction was forming, which, if permitted to fester, might result in a rival see wielding power in a way that undermined the authority of Rome. Political ambition weakened the hierarchy and threatened Rome because it rewarded those who were loyal to the faction rather than to the larger institution that was the church. It disrupted, as Leo put it, the entire system of ecclesiastical ordinances. Maintaining that system was the means by which the hierarchical relationships were preserved not only within the see of Beneventum, but between that see and Rome. Undermining that system through the capriciousness of personal favor implicitly subverted an exercise of authority that depended for its legitimacy upon each member of the hierarchy subscribing to a common set of institutional norms.[287]

The spread of Pelagianism among the clergy of northern Italy came to Leo's attention at the beginning of his papacy, when an informant named Septimus, the bishop of Altino, reported to him that several priests, deacons, and clergy in the province of Aquileia subscribed to the heresy.[288] Because they were members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, they managed to use their status in order to gain entry into private homes, where they presumably won new converts to their views.[289] Some among them were also reported to have left the church in which they received their office and to have wandered to other parishes, the physical act of which was thought to facilitate the spread of heresy, the word 'errare' in the Latin meaning both 'to wander' and 'to err' or 'to go astray'. The canons had long prohibited priests and bishops from transferring their churches, the penalty for such an ecclesiasti-

[287] "You are to put into effect without delay what we have decided ('decernimus')." To carry out his orders and restore discipline there, he entrusted Julius, the bishop of Puteoli, who was to serve later as his papal representative at the Council of Ephesus II.

[288] These were the churches set apart from the metropolitan jurisdiction of Rome by the range of the Apennine mountains. (Jalland, p. 96.) Prosper described the heresy in his Chronicle for the year 413 and in the five entries subsequent to it, but said nothing of Leo's attempts to eradicate it: "At this time, Pelagius, a Briton, proclaimed with his supporters, Caelestius and Julian [of Eclanum], the doctrine named after him that repudiated the grace of Christ. He attracted many people to his error." Prosper, *Epit. Chron.*, a. 413, 1252. 'Eodem tempore Pelagius Britto dogma nominis sui contra gratiam Christi Caelestio et Iuliano auditoribus exerit multosque in suum errorem trahit…' Leo, *Ep.* 1, Jaffé 398.

[289] Leo, *Ep.* 1.1, Jaffé 398. "Under the pretext of belonging to the church ('sub velamento communionis'), they enter many homes and corrupt the hearts of many who are unaware of their false name."

cal offense, should the person fail to return, being excommunication.[290] "We command that the constitutional canon be observed whereby they are not permitted to depart from the churches (to which they particularly belong) and wander on their own initiative to places not assigned to them. What is rightly not permitted for the innocent should be that much less permitted for those who are under suspicion."[291] Stability was not only a metaphorical concept by which the ecclesiastical hierarchy was urged to subscribe to a common set of canons and theological views, but a literal injunction to remain physically in the same place. Though it was undermined by the wandering clergy, it was strengthened by the set of ecclesiastical procedures and disciplinary norms that Leo articulated to counteract the heresy: the bishop of Aquileia was to convene a synod of all the clergy who, after associating with Pelagians, had been improperly readmitted to catholic communion; they were to condemn such views and subscribe to a catholic confession of the faith;[292] their failure to obey these orders ('praecepti') was to result in their exclusion from Christian fellowship ('societas ecclesiae').

The commitment to ascetic practice that the Pelagians presumably found so appealing, and the sense of personal control that a theology of moral deeds presumably imparted, was addressed only partially by Leo. He saw the spread of Pelagianism among the clergy mainly as a disciplinary failure, and its appeal among the laity as the result of an elaborate ruse.[293] Their catholic confessions were urged to be scrutinized closely, in case their "viper-like deception ('viperea fallacia')"

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[290] Apostolic Canons 13–14, Mansi, 1.31; Council of Nicaea, c. 15, Mansi, 2.681–682; Council of Arles, c. 2, 21, Mansi, 2.471, 473; Council of Carthage IV, c. 27, Mansi, 3.953; Hunt, *St. Leo the Great*, p. 22.

[291] Leo, *Ep.* 2.2, AD 442, *Lectis fraternitatis*, Jaffé 399. 'Circa quos etiam illam canonum constitutionem praecipimus custodiri, ne ab his ecclesiis, ad quas proprie pertinent, sinantur abscedere, et pro suo arbitrio ad loca sibi non deputata transire. Quod cum recte non permittitur inculpatis, multo minus debet licere suspectis.' See also *Ep.* 18, 30 December 447, *Lectis fraternitatis tuae*, Jaffé 416.

[292] Leo, *Ep.* 1.2, Jaffé 398. 'Damnent apertis professionibus suis superbi erroris auctores, et quidquid in doctrina eorum universalis ecclesia exhorruit, detestentur.' "In their frank declarations let them condemn the authors of this arrogant heresy and let them curse whatever the universal church has shuddered at in its teachings."

[293] Leo, *Ep.* 1.4, Jaffé 398. 'de exciso olim dogmate aliquod in provincia tua eiusdem mali germen oriatur, quod non solum in radicibus suis crescat, sed etiam sanctae ecclesiae sobolem veneno sui oris inficiat.' "[You must see to it]," Leo warned, "that no sprout of this same evil arises again in your province from a teaching already cut down. Not only would it grow where it has its roots, but it would infect even future generations in the holy Church with poison from its mouth."

and their ambiguous words might facilitate illegitimately their reentry into communion. Those who had made what was judged to be a legitimate confession were to be readmitted to their former rank without the slightest possibility for promotion. Even that punishment was, as Leo explained, a concession, a "great indulgence" ('magnum beneficium') that he granted only to clergy who had not undergone a second baptism by the Pelagians.[294] Containing the heresy through such disciplinary and procedural regulations was a strategy calculated to undermine a set of ideas about the capacity of personal effort to impart divine grace that some of the clergy of northern Italy found compelling.

Subscribing to the *christological* pronouncements of Rome was apparently more tolerable to the North Italian churches. A few months prior to the Council of Chalcedon, Leo wrote to Paschasinus, the bishop of Lilybaeum who was to serve as his papal legate there.[295] Because he was so far removed, both geographically and intellectually, from the intricacies of the christological debates, he needed further instruction in order to understand the *Tome*: "By [the Word] taking on the reality of our flesh, our nature was also united to that unchangeable substance… This 'taking on' is of such a nature and of *so great a union* that *one must believe that when the flesh was animated there was not only no sort of division in the childbearing of the blessed Virgin but even in the divinity's conception*. For divinity and humanity came together in *a unity of person*, both in the conception and in the childbearing of the Virgin (emphasis supplied)."[296] Meticulously, Leo explained that Christ consisted not only in two natures in one 'prosopon', as the language of the *Tome* asserted, but in 'a unity of *prosopon*', a phrase not used there. Why the addition? When Leo informed Paschasinus that the entire church of Constantinople, including its monasteries and bishops, as well as the bishop of Antioch, subscribed to the *Tome* and condemned Nestorius and Eutyches, it is reasonable to conclude that he was being defensive. His opponents, however, were surely not the clergy and bishop of Lilybaeum to whom he was writing, but rather his critics in the East who had accused his *Tome*

[294] Leo, *Ep.* 18, Jaffé 416.

[295] Leo, *Ep.* 88, 24 June 451, *Quamvis non dubitem*, Jaffé 468.

[296] Ibid., 88.1. 'suscepta autem veritate carnis nostrae illi inconvertibili substantiae nostram quoque unitam esse naturam … Quae susceptio tanta et talis unitio est, ut a carne animata, non solum in partu beatae Virginis, sed etiam in conceptu nulla Divinitatis sit credenda divisio: quoniam in unitate personae Divinitas atque humanitas et conceptu Virginis convenit et partu.'

of Nestorianism. To prepare his papal representative for any objections that might be raised at the upcoming council, he underscored the unity of person in Christ against the cries of Nestorianism that had been made by his opponents.

Like Paschasinus, the see of Milan was well disposed toward Leo's christology.[297] Several representatives whom Eusebius, the bishop of Milan, had sent to Chalcedon had recently returned, whereupon a synod was held under the co-presidency of the bishop, Abundantius, and the presbyter, Senator. There, in Milan, nineteen bishops subscribed to the condemnation of Eutyches, approved the *Tome*, and determined that its christology was consistent with that of Ambrose, the former bishop of Milan who had composed a treatise on the subject forty years earlier. They were correct in making such a judgment. The *Tome* drew heavily from the doctrine of the Incarnation that Ambrose had devised to meet the objections of his opponents, the Arians.[298] Because it was a restatement of christology with which the bishops and clergy of Milan were already familiar, the *Tome* posed little challenge to their theological views. That is the last we hear from the see of Milan, which was devastated by the Hunnic attacks of northern Italy the following year (452). From a sermon of Ps.-Maximus, however, we learn that the Milanese began to rebuild their basilica even before the Huns left Italy.[299] As one scholar remarked, "many [Milanese] survived [nonetheless], not because the Huns were so mild, but because [they] ran away faster than the Huns could pursue them: heavily loaded with booty, the Hunnic carts were too slow."[300]

How greatly Aquileia, the ecclesiastical center of northern Italy and the breeding ground for Pelagianism, suffered from the devastation inflicted by the Huns is well-documented in a number of sources.[301] The siege was, as Priscus described it, long and brutal, but

> the bravest of the Roman soldiers withstood [Attila and his forces] from within. At last the army was complaining and wished to withdraw. While Attila was walking around the walls, deliberating whether to break

[297] Leo, *Ep.* 97, AD 451, *Reversis, Domino annuente.*

[298] See Chapter 4, below.

[299] Ps. Maximus, *Serm.* 94, PL 57, 471A, cited by Maenchen-Helfen, *The World of the Huns*, p. 139, n. 670.

[300] Maenchen-Helfen, *The World of the Huns*, p. 139.

[301] Paul the Deacon, *Historia Romana* 14.9, ed. H. Droysen, *MGH AA* vol. 2 (Berlin, 1879), pp. 203–204.

> camp or delay longer, he noticed that the white birds, namely the storks … were hauling their young from the city and, contrary to custom, were carrying them out into the country… "You see," he said [to his soldiers], "the birds foresee the future. They are leaving the city, which is about to be destroyed …" What more is there to say? He inflamed the hearts of [his soldiers] to attack Aquileia again.[302]

The story of the storks was, of course, legendary. By repeating it, Priscus suggested that the siege was inevitable, that the Romans were powerless to stop the Huns whose taking of the city the storks had miraculously foreseen. The invasion was so devastating, he further implied, that not even the birds were willing to stay.

Some six years later (458) the city was sufficiently rebuilt that the bishop of Aquileia had returned to his see, ready to address the social and familial problems caused by the invasions.[303] The Huns had taken untold numbers of men captive and converted others to the Arian heresy, thereby disrupting the familial and ecclesiastical life of many in the region, wrote Nicetas, the bishop of Aquileia, to Leo. Several women whose husbands were taken captive had since remarried, only to find that their first husbands had managed to flee from their captors and return. While being held prisoner, some had been forced to eat sacrificial food and others had been baptized by the heretics. And a number of children from the city of Ravenna had been taken into captivity at such a young age that they could not recall whether they had ever been baptized.[304] At the request of bishops Nicetas of Aquileia and Neo of Ravenna, Leo addressed these problems in a series of papal decretals.[305]

With its major cities, Milan, Aquileia, and Ravenna, nearly destroyed by barbarian invaders, the churches of northern Italy, like the churches of Gaul, North Africa, and Spain, provisionally accepted Rome as its ecclesiastical and political center. The stability that Rome provided by its insistence on subscribing to catholic doctrine, obeying ecclesiastical law and discipline, and maintaining the church hierarchy was a comforting solution to the familial and social upheaval that had over-

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[302] Priscus, in Jordanes, *Getica*, 220–221, ed. Mommsen, *MGH AA*, vol. 5, p. 114. A more factual account of the siege follows in ibid., p. 222. Cited by Maenchen-Helfen, *The World of the Huns*, p. 133.

[303] Leo, *Ep.* 159, 21 March 458, *Regressus ad nos*, Jaffé 536.

[304] Ibid. 159.6–8; *Ep.* 166.1, 24 October 458, *Frequenter quidem*, Jaffé 543.

[305] For further discussion, see Chapter 2.2, below.

whelmed the region. Not only was its system of ecclesiastical laws and procedures the practical manifestation of this quest for stability, but, as I shall argue in the following chapter, it was also the expression of a comprehensive set of ideas about the relationship between divine and worldly justice.

CHAPTER TWO

THE IDEA OF JUSTICE AND ITS BEARING UPON LAW AND MERCY

1. *Justice and its human failings*

The concept that might be said to exemplify the transformation of late Roman intellectual life from a pagan to a Christian world view is the concept of justice. It underlies nearly every aspect of Christian thought, including redemption, charity, christology, history, moral conduct, law, and mercy. Scholars have long assumed that the Christian understanding of justice was an amalgamation of the Old Testament theology that was drawn from the book of Deuteronomy, in which the bad were punished and the good rewarded, and of the Stoic conception of practical ethics, in which people were bound to one another by their natural propensity to form associations. The first set of ideas Leo absorbed through his knowledge of Scripture, and the second through his familiarity with the Stoic-tinged writings of Ambrose and Augustine, by which he forged a distinctly Christian view of justice that underscored the moral relevance of charitable deeds, even while it admitted the possibility of divine mercy for those who did not meet such standards.[1]

The nuances of the transformation from the Stoic conception of justice to the Christian view that Leo represented has generally been neglected. To understand the significance of Leo's contribution it is worth examining those nuances. Cicero's idea of justice, for instance, had been based upon two distinctly Stoic notions, the first being of an

[1] The Stoic basis for their views can be found, for instance, in Cicero, *De finibus bonorum et malorum*, ed. L.D. Reynolds, (Oxford, 1998), 3.62–68. The universal association of the human race ('communis humani generis societas') was, according to the Stoics, grounded upon love, especially the love of parents for their children. Ibid. 3.62. The consequence of this innate love is that human beings naturally form unions, societies, and states ('coetus concilia civitates'), and, being the social creatures that they are, "prefer the common advantage to [their] own" ('communem utilitatem nostrae anteponamus'). Ibid. 3.64–65.

ethical nature, and the second, metaphysical: i) the natural impulse of parents to love their children led inevitably to the natural impulse of human beings to care for one another; and ii) law was not a set of principles to be adhered to, but was the practical embodiment of divine reason,[2] the definitive element not only in the creation of human beings, but also of the universe.[3] To assume that either one of these concepts was absorbed uncritically into the Christian tradition is to emphasize placid continuity at the expense of intellectual change. As Schofield has argued, the ethical move from the parental love for one's children to an altruistic love for humanity was ultimately grounded in Stoic rationality, whereby human beings formed associations in order to bring about different social ends.[4] It had nothing to do with the later Christian view that people should be concerned for each other merely because they were human beings. (That concept evolved fully in the context of the christological debates, as chapter 4 will show.) The Stoic attempt to ground its morality in a rational cosmology similarly implied that the sage, who embodied that rationality completely, expressed it without exception in his moral actions.[5] Christianity differed from Stoicism, however, in perceiving the human mind as only an image, and not a replica, of the perfect rationality of divinity. Even the ideal Christian could never fully comprehend God's moral plan. To accommodate that limitation, the ecclesiastical laws were infused with a paradoxical view of justice. Universal principles were acknowledged, even while the system of laws and the code of moral conduct could never fully embrace them.

The Priscillians, whom Leo described polemically, undermined this conception of justice because they were, in this regard, too much like the Stoics.[6] Their commitment to a universalism that saw the divine everywhere was reminiscent of the Stoic divine reason that pervaded the universe. The logical consequence of the Priscillianist view was a human person whose moral actions expressed the divine rational-

[2] M. Schofield, "Two Stoic Approaches to Justice," in eds. A. Laks, M. Schofield, *Justice and Generosity* (Cambridge, 1995), p. 206.

[3] Ibid., p. 193.

[4] Ibid., p. 203.

[5] P. Mitsis, "Natural Law and Natural Right in Post-Aristotelian Philosophy. The Stoics and Their Critics," *ANRW* 2, 36 (1994), pp. 4813, 4843. On law as the 'supreme reason' that generates positive laws, see J. Harries, *Cicero and the Jurists. From Citizens' Law to the Lawful State* (London, 2006), pp. 53–58.

[6] See chapter 1.3.

ity, and whose body and soul were controlled by the movements of stars, whose rationality they reflected.[7] I have already considered how this astrological fatalism undermined Leo's view that the potential for human freedom must be explored in the context of the Fall and redemption in Christ through the Incarnation. Because it made the human soul the equivalent of divinity, astrological fatalism artificially diminished the gulf between humanity and the divine by linking human moral action with the rationality of the cosmos. To make people dependent upon the stars rather than upon each other frustrated the unfolding of human relationships that was the implausible expression of divine intention. It made it impossible to reward virtue and to punish faults, destroying "all the decrees not only of human laws but also of the divine constitutions." That is because fatalism construed moral decision-making as an innate impulse of the human mind, rather than the studied deliberation of an imperfect humanity.[8] Without the possibility for moral failure, all human associations would be undone and "the divine and human law [would be] at once subverted."[9] The messy reality of human imperfection, which was embodied in the Fall and was the reason for the Incarnation, was understood with particular acuteness by Leo, for whom it formed the center of his christology.

In condemning astrological fatalism, Leo did not thereby subscribe to an Old Testament theology of justice,[10] in which the good were rewarded and the bad punished. When he said that attributing human interactions to the course of the stars would not only sever the bonds of society, but also frustrate the divine plan for redemption, he was simply spelling out the implications that such a view of justice might have for a theology of the human person.[11] Leo was troubled not only by the possibility that human beings were rendered unwitting cogs in a cosmological machine, but that they were made too much like God in being endowed with a rationality that perfectly reflected the cosmos. Redemption was undermined not merely because the basis for moral responsibility had been dismantled. It was undermined because human

[7] Leo, *Ep.* 15.11, 21 July 447, *Quam laudabiliter pro*, Jaffé 412.

[8] Leo, *Ep.* 15.0, 21 July 447, Jaffé 412; cf. *Serm.* 43.2, 25 February 445, *Apostolica, dilectissimi, doctrina nos admonet.*

[9] Leo, *Ep.* 15.0, 21 July 447, Jaffé 412.

[10] On the shift in Augustine's view of grace during the years of the Pelagian controversy, see generally, G.R. Evans, *Augustine on Evil* (New York, 1982), pp. 128–136.

[11] Leo, *Ep.* 15.10, 21 July 447, Jaffé 412.

beings whose actions were morally unambiguous contradicted the story of the Fall, in which all human action was tainted by the transgression of Adam.

The abiding problem of justice—why the good suffered—that late Roman Christians ambitiously faced was addressed by Leo in this context. Because God did not administer the divine law by compensating each according to her individual merits,[12] and because "[t]he measure of celestial gifts is not weighed according to the quality of our works,"[13] suffering, the space between what one got and what one deserved, was construed as the salient characteristic of the human condition. It was the inevitable consequence of an imperfect humanity whose nature was incapable of perceiving the rationality of God's plan. Although justice was administered by God perfectly, human beings could not comprehend it. For the seemingly unequal and haphazard distribution of heavenly compensation, Leo urged his congregations to be grateful, for "if the Lord were to take note of sins, no one would be able to bear his judgment."[14] This nuanced understanding of divine punishment incorporated the working of grace upon the individual, which was thought to mirror the grace in Christ, which God had bestowed upon him freely and not in compensation for his merit.[15] The idea that grace saved people, not works, that grace was the principle of righteousness ('justitia'), the fount of goodness, and the origin of merit that was the basis for moral action was derived from the letters of Paul.[16] What made its operation possible, however, was the divine 'praeparatio', not the innate diligence ('naturalis industria') of the human person, as the Pelagians might have said: "Every bestowal of good works is by divine preparation ('praeparatio'), because one is not justified by excellence ('virtus') before he is by grace."[17] This was a condemnation not only of Pelagian theology, but also of the anthropological implications of astrological fatalism. The conviction that human beings could not be moral actors without divine assistance presumed in Leo's refutation both of the Pelagians and of the fatalists that humanity was only an image, and not a duplicate, of the divine, rational mind.

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[12] Leo, *Serm.* 2.1, 29 September 441, *Honorabilem mihi.*

[13] Leo, *Serm.* 2.1, 29 September 441. 'Neque enim de qualitate nostrorum operum pendet caelestium mensura donorum.'

[14] Leo, *Serm.* 2.1, 29 September 441.

[15] Leo, *Serm.* 2.1, 29 September 441.

[16] Leo, *Ep.* 1.3, 442 (?), *Relatione sancti*, Jaffé 398.

[17] Leo, *Ep.* 1.3, 442 (?), Jaffé 398.

Understanding human beings as autonomous individuals endowed with a free will that made them capable of performing virtuous acts was essential to this conception of justice. Free will, as the precondition for the Fall, was also an integral part of the divine plan for human redemption. That Adam had sinned deliberately and voluntarily meant that even "the devil had not dealt with the first man so violently as to bring him over to his side without the consent of free will ('sine liberi arbitrii consensione')."[18] Because that voluntary sin was then inherited by the human race, there was a sense in which Leo, Augustine, Ambrose, and others in the West believed that human beings deserved to be subjected to the devil and to be penalized with mortality. The punishment—death—suited the magnitude of the crime.[19] Among such thinkers it was generally agreed that Adam's voluntary sin had to be redressed in a manner consistent with the principles of justice.[20] Although "[t]he omnipotence of the Son of God … could have saved the human race from the tyranny of the devil by the sole power of his will," the perfect rationality of divine justice demanded that the freedom innate ('libertas naturalis') in human beings be restored "through that very substance ('per ipsam materiam') by which the universal captivity had been effected," and not unilaterally by divine power.[21] Respecting the mechanics of justice preserved the dignity of the human being by implicitly acknowledging her place in the cosmos as a flawed, though rational, decision-maker.[22]

The logical extension of this way of thinking was to imagine a Christ who, as the son of Adam who had played no part in, and was innocent of, the original betrayal, suffered as a human being in order to compensate for Adam's original transgression. By paying the debt that humanity had incurred through this voluntary sin, human beings were redeemed not by the unilateral power of God, but as free individuals by the perfectly just actions of the God-man Christ. With its autonomy fully intact, humanity was transformed into something that resembled the divine on two levels: the logic of human justice that was reflected

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[18] Leo, *Serm.* 28.3, 452, *Cum semper nos*.

[19] Leo, *Serm.* 22.3, Recension A, 25 December 441, *Exultemus in Domino*.

[20] Leo, *Serm.* 22.3, Recension A, 25 December 441. "He would not use the force of power to destroy the devil's work, but the reasonableness of justice." 'ad destruendam opus diaboli non virtute uteretur potentiae, sed ratione iustitiae.'

[21] Leo, *Serm.* 63.1, 19 March 452, *Gloria, dilectissimi, dominicae passionis*.

[22] See Leo, *Serm.* 39.3, Recension A, 9 February 441, *Hebraeorum quondam populus et omnes Israheliticae tribus*.

in the story of redemption mirrored the rationality of the divine mind. And Adam's debt being paid in a manner consistent with such rational principles restored human beings to the immortality that had been theirs prior to the Fall. Paradoxically, human beings approached divine perfection only when their rationality was explored in the context of a freedom that was fully human.

This was also the pattern of justice set forth in the Passion narrative of the Gospels, which, in spite of its seeming inevitability, was generally interpreted by Leo and others so as to make Christ acquiesce in the crimes that had been committed against him. He was never thought to have orchestrated his own demise.[23] As an autonomous being whose actions were also free from sin, Christ surrendered to his fate and showed kindness to his betrayer (Judas) by taking him in as a disciple, making him an apostle, warning him with signs, and blessing him with mysteries. This was a model of justice that Christians could aspire to imitate, because it imagined a Christ who, like ordinary human beings, maintained a delicate balance between shaping his fate, on the one hand, and ultimately succumbing to it, on the other.[24] Christ became the archetype for human freedom by maintaining the principles of justice when he paid Adam's debt, and then by inscribing those principles into the divine plan for redemption. Surprisingly, the metaphorical language that Leo used to describe this plan was rooted in the Roman secular law governing business transactions, where legal debts could be canceled only if an amount, either in money or in kind, equivalent to the original debt was tendered: "That universal and fatal bond ('chirographum') for our sale has been made void, and the contractual right for our captivity has transferred to the Redeemer."[25] To honor those contractual rights the divinity had not, in a supreme display of power, overcome the original sin of Adam. The same laws and principles by which an autonomous Adam had sinned of his own free will

[23] Leo, *Serm.* 67.3, 28 March 454, *Semper quidem, dilectissimi*. 'Quod itaque Dominus Iesus Christus furorem frementium pati voluit, in nullo auctor eorum criminum fuit.' "Although the Lord Jesus Christ wished to suffer the wrath of their fury, he was in no way the author of their crime."

[24] Cf. Leo, *Serm.* 62.6, 16 March 452, *Desiderata nobis, dilectissimi*. The Passion not only accomplished the forgiving of sins, but established the pattern of justice ('forma iustitiae').

[25] Leo, *Serm.* 61.4, 4 April 445, *Cum multis modis, dilectissimi*. 'Evacuatum est generale illud venditionis nostrae et letale chirographum, et pactum captivitatis in ius transiit Redemptoris.'

were those by which humanity was eventually to be redeemed. The dignity of humanity was preserved, therefore, by acknowledging human beings as free and by securing their redemption in the context of the human story of the Fall. Moral failure was implicitly acknowledged by this model as a possibility.

The operation of justice did not, therefore, resolve the moral ambiguity inherent in human action. The tension remained between a Christian anthropology in which the power to choose freely made people into morally responsible, ethical beings, and the more extreme view, which recognized grace as a gift that was given without compensation for merit, not only to Christ, but also to humanity. Freedom was negotiated for Augustine in the space that was precariously situated between free choice ('liberum arbitrium') and the concept of the will ('voluntas'), which was the 'moral self' of the human being that was the cause of all its actions. The habits that people formed made either good or bad their particular choices, which were guided by the will that was coexistent with the moral person. Because they had choices, people were implicitly free.[26] The theology of the person to which Leo subscribed was less sophisticated and for that reason more aptly reflected the moral issues that late Roman Christians habitually confronted. Sometimes he chastised his congregations for assuming that the quality of human actions bore no relationship to the disapproval of divine providence, "as if evil deeds were not for the most part struck down with the most obvious punishments."[27] In those instances, freedom of choice was implicitly praised for being the necessary condition that enabled people to perform the virtuous acts, or the misdeeds, that were the basis for divine and secular reward and punishment. Following the example of the good works performed by Christ was the way in which humanity was expected to exercise virtuously the freedom that had been bestowed upon it.

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[26] Augustine, *De spiritu et littera*, 58 (33), PL 44, 238. See J.M. Rist, "Augustine on Free Will and Predestination," *JTS* 20 (1969), pp. 421–422, on the will ('voluntas') as synonymous with the person. Augustine never presents people as being under the coercion of the will, no matter how deeply it governed their moral behavior. It was simply the 'moral personality' that they were. Ibid. For Augustine's view that grace is consistent with the freedom of the will, see his *Retractationes*, 2.66, PL 32, 656; idem. *De gratia et libero arbitrio*, 2 (2), 10 (5), PL 44, 882–883, 887–888; idem. *De spiritu et littera*, 52 (30), PL 44, 233–234.

[27] Leo, *Serm.* 35.3, 445, *Hodiernam festivitatem, dilectissimi.* 'quasi non evidentissimis plerumque suppliciis male gesta plectantur.'

What made that demand well within the capacity of ordinary people was the deeply held conviction that humanity, as Leo and others conceived it, had been made in the image and likeness of God.[28] This fact of human creation endowed people with the innate capacity to imitate the divine mercy, by which they might enable themselves to partake in divine power ('potentia').[29] By their very nature, therefore, people were imbued with the potential to live ethical lives. At other times Leo was more circumspect. Human beings were not to presume that the common view of justice, whereby the good are rewarded and the bad punished, could ever suffice to explain the justice of God, in which heavenly rewards are not granted according to the ethical quality of an individual's works.[30] That was how he acknowledged the injustices of the late Roman West, in which some of its major cities had already fallen to the barbarians and where "all life is a test, and each one is [not] rewarded according to what he deserves."[31] Under such trying circumstances, his congregations were meant to believe that the divine justice continued to operate.

To address the inequities of daily life that were a source of continuing tension, Leo applied the scriptural axiom:[32] "Forgive us our debts as we forgive those in debt to us."[33] Human action thus directed was the appropriate response to the problem of worldly injustice. Forgiving the faults of others, including the inequities that they perpetrated, allowed people to set the stage for receiving divine forgiveness and, therefore, justice on a cosmic scale.[34] Being merciful was construed

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[28] Leo, *Serm.* 45.2, 10 February 452, *Virtus, dilectissimi, et sapientia fidei christianae.*

[29] Leo, *Serm.* 50.3, 9 March 458 (?), *Adpropinquante, dilectissimi, sollemnitate paschali.* Augustine conceived the matter differently. People were not only to emulate divine mercy, as Leo asked of them. They were to receive it willingly, as the necessary condition for performing good works. Their good works did not precede the mercy ('misericordia') of God, but followed it. Augustine, *De patientia*, 21 (18), PL 40, 621; see also idem. *Enchiridion ad Laurentium*, 82 PL 40, 271.

[30] Leo, *Serm.* 2.1, 29 September 441.

[31] Leo, *Serm.* 2.1, 29 September 441. 'tota vita temptatio est, hoc unicuique retribuitur quod meretur.'

[32] Leo, *Serm.* 43.2, 25 February 445. 'cum quaedam non secundum desideria nostra procedunt, et sub humani errore iudicii superior est plerumque iniqui causa quam iusti … etiam magnos animos ista concutiant et in aliquod inlicitae causationis murmur inpellant.' "Since some things happen contrary to our desires, and, due to the error of human justice, the case of the wicked is often favored over that of the righteous, … such matters trouble even great souls and incite some murmuring about an unlawful plea."

[33] Leo, *Serm.* 43.4, 25 February 445.

[34] Leo, *Serm.* 44.3, 25 February 451, *Semper quidem, dilectissimi.* 'When we grant forgiveness ('venia') to others' faults, we are preparing divine mercy ('clementia') for ourselves.'

as more than a virtuous disposition of the will; it enabled people to impose upon the divinity the terms of a legal contract. To grant forgiveness and repudiate vengeance activated this 'contract' from Scripture, the prayer for forgiveness by which human beings might enter into a contract with the divine:[35] "Testimony ('testificatio') for the divine oath is found in those promises that have been fixed by immutable decrees."[36]

This ethic shared something in common with the Greek moral philosophers who, as Prior has observed, "had accepted the egocentric nature of human motivation and had built their ethics on a concept of enlightened self-interest."[37] The Stoic concern for familial and civic virtue prevented its practitioners from adopting such a narcissistic view.[38] For the Stoics, human excellence, i.e., the capacity to cultivate virtues that might facilitate associations, brought human action to bear upon justice.[39] There was no easy theological move, however, from the Stoic propensity to form associations to the Christian concept of altruistic justice. The "enlightened self-interest" of the Greek moral philosophers perhaps supplied the missing connection. In an anthropology such as Leo's, which was centered upon the fragility of human imperfection, the concept of mercy, rather than the striving for excellence, appropriately acknowledged, and even permitted, human beings to be the selfish creatures that they were.

Such thinkers as Ambrose and Augustine construed justice differently by combining the Stoic theory of practical ethics with the Christian mandate "to love one's neighbor." The love of parents for their children that was the first impulse to form human associations was, for the Stoics, the natural expression of humanity's providential design as beings whose purpose was procreation. Their ethic was implicitly connected to "a teleological theory of universal nature,"[40] whose ultimate aim was to live in harmony with the "right reason ('orthos logos') that

[35] It was construed as an opportunity for enterprising Christians to receive heavenly rewards. Leo, *Serm.* 48.4, 13 March 455, *Inter omnes, dilectissimi.*

[36] Leo, *Serm.* 5.3, post 445(?), *Sicut honor est filiorum, dilectissimi, dignitas patrum.*

[37] W.J. Prior, *Virtue and Knowledge: An Introduction to Ancient Greek Ethics* (New York, 1991), p. 213.

[38] According to Stoic anthropology, each and every human being is a part of this world, a member of a city or state with an obligation to serve the interests of the common weal. Cicero, *De finibus*, 3.64.

[39] Schofield, "Two Stoic approaches to justice," pp. 203–204.

[40] Ibid., p. 197.

pervaded" the cosmos.[41] The practical expression of that life in accordance with reason was the formation of human relationships, in which the first impulse to love was the ethical basis for caring for someone other than oneself,[42] an impulse that eventually extended to the entire human race. Like the Stoics, Ambrose thought that each human being was to "neglect his own advantage in order to guard the common justice."[43] But in divorcing this Stoic notion of human relationships (i.e., that "people were to prefer the common justice to their own") from its metaphysical underpinnings, he imagined a distinctly Christian view of justice that was no longer synonymous with the 'right reason' that guided the universe. Because it was selfless and beneficial to others, justice cemented the bonds of fellowship among Christians.[44] These bonds were further strengthened by imitating the example of altruism that was the life of Christ: "Just as [Christ] … did not attend to his own interests but ours," said Augustine, "so should we willingly and in imitation of him bear one another's burdens."[45] Selfless love was an integral part of Augustine's theory of justice in which the loving acts of Christ and the apostles were the examples that should inspire human beings to embrace the principle of righteousness. This model of justice, which operated in the lives of exemplary Christians, had the epistemological implication of enabling them to perceive the true form of righteousness that was God. "Let no one say, 'I do not know what I should love.' Let him love his brother, and he will love the same love. He knows the love by which he loves more than [he knows] the brother whom he loves. So God can be more known than his brother; actually more known because more present, more known because more within, more known because more certain."[46] Insofar as it facilitated the knowledge of God, this pattern of Christian love was a departure from a Stoic altruism

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[41] Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae Philosophorum*, ed. M. Marcovich, *Diogenis Laertii Vitae Philosophorum* (Stutgart, 1999), 7.88.

[42] Schofield, "Two Stoic approaches to justice," p. 196.

[43] Ambrose, *De Officiis Ministrorum*, 1.115, PL 16, 57B. 'utilitatem propriam negligit, ut communem aequitatem custodiat.'

[44] i.e., without reference to the divine reason. Cf. Ambrose, *De officiis ministrorum*, 1.135, PL 16, 63A. Christians were to help one another that the kindness of society ('societatis gratia') might be increased.

[45] Augustine, *De diversis quaestionibus lxxxiii*, 71, PL 40, 82.

[46] Augustine, *De trin.*, 8 (8).12, PL 42, 957. On love for neighbor as a necessary condition of love for God, see R. Channing, "The Distinction between Love for God and Love for Neighbour in St. Augustine," in ed. E. Ferguson, *Christian Life: Ethics, Morality and Discipline in the Early Church* (New York, London, 1993), p. 11.

that saw social relationships as the inevitable expression of divine reason, rather than the place for human striving.

Although Leo was ambivalent about the relevance of works in the scheme of divine restitution (due to the history of Pelagianism in the West), sometimes acknowledging its place in the operation of divine justice, while at other times merely denouncing the inequities of his world, he was, nevertheless, certain that the practice of mercy enabled people to participate in shaping their future salvation. God "who is a merciful and just listener to the prayers of humanity has prescribed his justice ('aequitas') according to our kindness ('lenitas'), that the law of severity would not hold for those whom he had not found eager for revenge ('ultio')."[47] Being merciful to others guaranteed the forgiveness of any number of sins and shortcomings in one's self.[48] While for Augustine, mercy was the corollary of justice that facilitated humanity's knowledge of the divine, for Leo it facilitated its unmediated knowledge of the self. It was the divine quality most amenable to imitation, the mirror ('speculum') by which ordinary human beings might examine their souls and determine how and whether they conformed to the image of God ('imago Dei').[49] To develop that quality, people were urged to embody in their everyday lives and in their relationships with each other such Christian virtues as forgiveness, humility, kindness, and gentleness. Pride was to be expelled by the love for humility ('humilitas'), and conceit to be tempered with gentleness ('mansuetudo');[50] they were to "let harshness ('saevitia') subside, let wrath ('iracundia') be calmed, let all forgive faults one to another, and let the petitioner for forgiveness not be the one who exacts vengeance."[51] The practical result of this spirit of gentleness was that enmity among people ('humana inimicitia') might surrender to peace, that those confined in prison might be released in a merciful act.[52]

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[47] Leo, *Serm.* 43.4, 25 February 445.

[48] Leo, *Serm.* 50.3, 9 March 458 (?); see also ibid. 'Since there is no one who does not sin, there is no one who should not pardon.'

[49] Leo, *Serm.* 49.4, 17 February 457, *In omnibus quidem, dilectissimi.*

[50] Leo, *Serm.* 44.3, 25 February 451.

[51] Leo, *Serm.* 43.4, 25 February 445.

[52] Leo, *Serm.* 44.3, 25 February 451; Leo, *Serm.* 45.4, 10 February 452: "Let hate be abolished, let rivalries ('simultas') dissolve, let the emotions ('affectus') of peace and goodwill be multiplied, and let he who has allowed himself to be polluted with malice strive to be cleansed with goodness ('benignitas')." Leo, *Serm.* 45.2, 10 February 452: "He who is a stranger to truth is not merciful ('misericors'), nor is he who is foreign to goodness ('pietas') capable of justice."

Because the Christians of the late Roman world saw that the principles of justice did not operate perfectly in human affairs, many, including Leo, believed that justice and truth were to be infused with the virtues of mercy ('misericors') and compassion. The just were to be compassionate and the merciful to embody what was true: "as the just soul ('mens') walks along the path of truth, so the gentle soul walks along the path of mercy. Yet these roads are never divided, as if each of these virtues were sought by different byways, and it were one thing to grow in mercy and another to progress in truth."[53] Connecting justice with compassion and mercy with truth made the concept of justice something that people might implement. Because they could never duplicate, or even comprehend, the providential unfolding of justice, the virtues of mercy and compassion were construed as being synonymous with a complex, and often contradictory, idea whose application was meant to soften the blows of a difficult world.

Although it had been traditionally associated with mercy, compassion was construed as equally fundamental to the practice of justice. It was the virtue that enabled those in power, such as bishops charged with administering the ecclesiastical laws, to apply and interpret those laws fairly. Embodying the quality of compassion was also necessary for ordinary people to comprehend (as much as they were able) the elusive principles of justice that operated in their everyday lives, where good works might go unrewarded and misdeeds unpunished. Being without compassion, therefore, signaled more than a lack of mercy. It denied the human capacity for truth and justice, which made one prone to anger and vengeance, lacking in sympathy, and therefore virtually inhuman: "Since the judgment of God is as harsh to the pitiless as it is compassionate ('clemens') to the merciful, and when those on the left have been thrust into the fire of hell for their inhumanity, the eternal blessedness of the heavenly kingdom will receive those on the right who have been praised for the kindness of their alms."[54] This view of compassion was close to acknowledging what Stoic philosophy, with its insistence upon the providential design of human impulse and association, had fallen short of articulating, namely that human beings should be kind to one another simply because they are human beings.

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[53] Leo, *Serm.* 45.2, 10 February 452.

[54] Leo, *Serm.* 45.4, 10 February 452. 'Quoniam iudicium Dei, sicut inmitibus vehemens, ita erit misericordibus clemens, et detrusis in ignem gehennae propter inhumani-

The precise relationship between mercy and judgment had especially confounded Augustine, who confronted the problem explicitly in his exegesis of Psalm 100, "Mercy and judgment shall I sing to you, O Lord." What puzzled Augustine was how God might be simultaneously merciful and just without losing any of the attributes pertaining to each.[55] (Because mercy and truth, whatever their philosophical connection might be, were the two qualities that God exhibited in his love for humanity, his mercy in forgiving sins and his truth in fulfilling his promises, people were to follow a similar path by extending mercy toward the miserable and pronouncing the truth in making judgments.)[56] While these seemingly contradictory principles of justice remained for Leo elusive to the human mind, for Augustine they operated consistently and comprehensibly over the course of history. People did not perceive the action of mercy and justice in their daily lives because these divine attributes, which God perfectly represented,[57] never occurred simultaneously. The clue was the words of Psalm 100 ("Mercy and judgment …"), which, being arranged on the page so that one word followed another in a linear fashion, depicted through that visual representation successive points in salvific time, the present being the time for mercy, the future that of judgment.[58] Leo never attempted to explain the conundrum of God's merciful justice, because he saw in that unresolved paradox both the appropriate expression of the human condition and the ambiguous moral space in which human action might be profitably effected.

The ecclesiastical law and discipline were the practical manifestation of a theory of law and justice that drew upon both the Jewish law of Moses and the Stoic philosophy of ethics. While Leo followed mainstream Christian thought in stating that the advent of Christ had terminated the Jewish law, "not by emptying its figures ('significatio') but

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tatem sinistris, dextros elemosinarum pietate laudatos, aeterna caelestis regni beatitudo suscipiet.'

[55] Augustine, *Enarrationes in psalmos*, ps. 100, v. 1, PL 37, 1282.

[56] Augustine, *Enarrationes in psalmos*, ps. 88, v. 25, PL 37, 1130. 'debemus ei reddere misericordiam et veritatem; misericordiam, ut miserorum misereamur; veritatem, ut non inique judicemus. Non tibi tollat veritas misericordiam, nec misericordia impediat veritatem.' "We should give back to [God] mercy and truth: mercy that we may have compassion for the miserable and truth that we not judge unjustly. Let truth not abolish mercy, nor mercy get in the way of truth."

[57] Augustine, *Enarrationes in psalmos*, ps. 44, v. 8, PL 36, 505.

[58] Ibid.

by fulfilling them,"[59] he was reluctant to say that the law in its entirety had been revoked. Only that part of the law that foretold the coming of Christ—the Sabbath, the circumcision of the flesh, and other such ritual observances—had been completed once the expectation of his arrival had been fulfilled. Among the moral precepts, none of the earlier decrees was thought to have been repudiated. Because the Gospel teachings had, in fact, made these moral decrees broadly applicable, observing them voluntarily was especially beneficial to Christians.[60] Just as this moral law was incorporated into the ecclesiastical law governing the clergy, so was a typically Stoic list of virtues adopted, including such qualities as moderation ('temperantia'), courage ('fortitudo'), prudence ('prudentia'), and justice ('iustitia'). In the first century, these virtues had been modified by the Christians to provide their nascent communities with an ethical framework.[61] In writing to Ravennius, the same bishop of Arles who replaced Leo's nemesis, Hilary, Leo urged him to embody the virtues of patience, clemency, modesty, and constancy, for he was to "let authority not be wanting in [his] modesty, let clemency commend constancy, let leniency temper justice, let patience restrain liberty," and to refrain from arrogance altogether.[62]

The model of justice that Leo envisioned was a subtle departure from the Stoic theory of natural law, in which the rational man internalized the moral law that was itself rooted in universal nature. "The law had not been set down for the righteous (1 Tim 1:9)," Leo said, for the just person was thought to fill the norms of legal precepts by the discernment of his or her will, the true love of justice containing within itself the apostolic authority and the canonical sanctions. Since a notion of justice was contained within these very laws, and since the ecclesiastical laws were that notion of justice, a man in authority, such as Ravennius, was to continue to cultivate the appropriate list of virtues by which he might become that just man. Merely following the ecclesiastical laws did not suffice to interpret them properly, for they were implemented by the intention of the interpreter and by the quality of his character.

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[59] Leo, *Serm.* 63.5, 19 March 452, *Gloria, dilectissimi, dominicae passionis*.

[60] Leo, *Serm.* 63.5, 19 March 452.

[61] See for instance, Seneca's list of virtues (*Epistulae Morales*, ep. 120.11), which includes moderation ('temperantia'), courage ('fortitudo'), prudence ('prudentia'), and justice ('iustitia'). ed. L.D. Reynolds, *L. Annaei Senecae ad Lucilium epistulae morales* (Oxford, 1965).

[62] Leo, *Ep.* 41, c. 22 August 449, *Provectionem dilectionis*, Jaffé 435.

Because the character of the good man thereby replaced the universal reason that was the foundation of Stoic moral theory, a rigid set of rules and principles was no longer the province of ecclesiastical law, as it might have been had Stoic legal philosophy been embraced uncritically. This way of construing justice was, rather, a restatement of ideas expressed in the first century by, among others, the rhetorician, Quintilian, who defended rhetoric from its critics by placing it among the arts that were especially the province of the good man ('vir bonus'), namely he who could learn to use it for a just outcome.[63] Insofar as the ecclesiastical law was fundamentally rooted in a divine justice whose perfection could never be fully comprehended, the character of the legal interpreter, shaped by both Judaic-Christian morality and Stoic virtue, became the place through which the principles of justice were implemented.

Augustine, in his exposition of the Psalms, interpreted this same passage from Timothy (1 Tim 1:9), "The law has not been set down for the righteous man," that Leo used in developing his theory of justice for the benefit of Ravennius. By distinguishing between being "under the law ('sub lege')" and "in the law ('in lege')," Augustine separated the Jewish law, which was "written and imposed upon the servant," from "the law of God and of Christ" which was "perceived mentally by one who does not need its letter."[64] The same category of 'the law' was, therefore, understood to consist in three different relationships: "under the law" were the slaves-to-the-letter-of-the-law Jews; "in the law" were the spiritual Christians as well as the Jews who practiced their customs, but did not impose them upon Christians (by whom Augustine must have had in mind the circumcised Christians such as the apostle Paul); and "without the law" were the pagans. Being "under the law" was to submit to its injunctions out of the fear of punishment rather than the love for righteousness, such a person being guilty in his will ('voluntas') of secretly ('occulte') desiring that the thing he feared—the law—might not exist at all.[65]

This distinction between the written and unwritten law, which persisted intertwined among these categories, probably influenced Leo's

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[63] Quintilian, *Institutiones oratoriae*, 2.16, ed. M. Winterbottom, *M. Fabi Quintiliani, Institutionis oratoriae libri duodecim* (Oxford, 1970).

[64] Augustine, *Enarrationes in psalmos*, ps. 1, v. 2, PL 36, 67; ibid. *De opere monachorum*, 11 (12), PL 40, 558. He did not so differentiate 'the law' as to make the law of the Jews one thing, and that of God another.

[65] Augustine, *De nat. et grat.*, 67, PL 44, 280.

view that the unwritten law was the principle of righteousness contained within the just man, whose virtuous character gave content to the ecclesiastical law. Like Augustine, he construed the "written and unwritten law" as the difference between the law of Moses and the moral 'law' of Christians. And like Augustine, he understood the love for righteousness, which only the latter contained, as the basis for that distinction. The idea that an unwritten law, superior to the written, existed in the mind "that did not need its letter" was the principle that guided this conception of ecclesiastical justice. Being a righteous man, Ravennius was to maintain his character virtuously in order to ensure that he interpret the ecclesiastical laws justly. He was to be "in the law" in the sense that he himself, and not some moral abstraction, was to fill the norms of legal precepts with the righteousness that was his character. This way of construing legal interpretation is worth bearing in mind when considering Leo's frustration with bishops whom he accused of violating the spirit of ecclesiastical law.

Augustine's major contribution to the philosophy of law and justice, which influenced Medieval thinkers greatly, was to reconstruct the Stoic conception of 'right reason' ('lex naturalis' or 'orthos logos'), the perfectly rational nature that created an objective and rational world,[66] into the Christian conception of the eternal law ('lex aeterna') that operated and existed exclusively within the intellect of God.[67] The eternal law became the divine reason of a personal creator, which directed "everything to its proper end through consistent mediating factors," and "which command[ed] the observance of the natural order of things."[68] That is not to suggest that the eternal law was other than the world that it created, any more than the Stoic reason was "an instrument to maximize an antecedently and independently given set of goods."[69] Both the Augustinian and Stoic way of construing the law saw it as imbuing the world with the rationality that made it good. This divine

[66] For the 'optimally reasonable world' that the Stoic nature creates, see M. Frede, "On the Stoic Conception of the Good," in ed. K. Ierodiakonou, *Topics in Stoic Philosophy* (New York, 1999), p. 76.

[67] A.-H. Chroust, "The Philosophy of Law from St. Augustine to St. Thomas Aquinas," *The New Scholasticism* 20 (1946), p. 26; M.T. Clark, "Augustine on Justice," *Revue des études augustiniennes* 9 (1963), p. 90; A. Parel, "Justice and love in the political thought of St. Augustine," in ed. H.A. Meynell, *Grace, Politics and Desire: Essays on Augustine* (Calgary, 1990), pp. 71–84; E. TeSelle, "Justice, love, peace," in ed. W.S. Babcock, *Augustine Today* (Grand Rapids, MI, 1993), pp. 88–110.

[68] Chroust, "The Philosophy of Law of St. Augustine," pp. 196–197.

[69] Frede, "On the Stoic Conception of the Good," p. 76.

order ('lex aeterna') that permeated all things was the moral standard that constituted the absolute and objective good through which was judged the value of human action.[70] The natural or moral law ('lex naturalis') was "the conscious 'participation' of rational man in the 'lex aeterna'," the imprint of the eternal law on the human soul.[71] Leo had something slightly different in mind when he said that animals, lacking intellect and the ability to reason, could not have received the law;[72] that it was Adam, the first human being capable of living according to the image and likeness of his creator, who had been animated with a rational spirit that gave him the innate capacity to imitate divine justice;[73] and that Adam's heirs and successors were rational human beings who were destined to persevere in the law that had been issued to him by following the example and good works ('exemplum et merita') of Christ.[74] There was no sense here of an eternal law imprinted on the human soul, only of a rationality that enabled imperfect human beings to judge the quality of their lives according to the ethical standards of the divine commandments.[75]

For Augustine, this rational nature endowed humanity with the innate capacity not merely to imitate divine justice, but to perceive that the order of the universe was somehow righteous. That same capacity extended to the application of the secular law, which was derived from the divine and interlocking order of the universe that was the 'lex aeterna'.[76] Because it was implicitly just, a reflection of that interlocking order, secular law had the innate potential to secure its legitimacy, for "crimes ('flagitia') contrary to the practices ('mores') of men … are to be avoided, that an agreement confirmed by the custom ('consuetudino') or law ('lex') of a city or nation may not be violated by any

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[70] this according to Augustine. See Chroust, "The Philosophy of Law of St. Augustine" (1944), p. 197. Here, Augustine's view is not all that different from the Stoics'. See e.g., Frede, 'On the Stoic Conception of the Good,' pp. 93–94, on how difficult it is for people to conform to the rational nature. It requires people to be rational in their behavior rather than in their own state of mind.

[71] Chroust, "The Philosophy of Law of St. Augustine," p. 197.

[72] Leo, *Serm.* 20.3, post 445?, *Dispensationes misericordiae Dei.* That animals follow their first impulse, while people are rational beings led by reason, was a distinction current among the Stoics. See e.g., Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae Philosophorum*, 7.85–86.

[73] Leo, *Serm.* 24.2, 443, *Semper quidem, dilectissimi.*

[74] Leo, *Serm.* 28.3, 452.

[75] Leo, *Serm.* 49.4, 17 February 457?, *In omnibus quidem, dilectissimi.*

[76] Chroust, "The Philosophy of Law of St. Augustine" (1944), p. 197.

lawless pleasure ('nulla libidine') of a citizen or stranger."[77] Acts that violated the secular law also violated the universal order, the part ('pars'), i.e., the unjust act, being inconsistent ('non congruens') with the just ordering of the whole.[78] Only God was capable of overturning the laws, customs, and treaties of nations, because He alone was presumed to comprehend perfectly the natural order, the relationship between part and whole that was this order of justice.[79] It is not then surprising that this conception of justice was inexorably bound to an unchanging truth that was never construed in relative terms: "Is justice then various and changeable? But the times over which it presides are not all alike; they are indeed times."[80]

Leo modified this view subtly by emphasizing the necessity of being merciful in the light of the absolute order of the universe that constituted justice. While the divine and ecclesiastical laws were thought to be absolutely true, he, nonetheless, believed that applying them harshly and literally, being pitiless and vengeful, was contrary to some inaccessible and incomprehensible principle of justice. We have already seen how Leo and Augustine gave content to that intuition by construing the traditional associations of "justice and truth," "mercy and compassion" more profitably as "justice and compassion," "mercy and truth." In making such connections Leo was indebted to Ambrose as well, whose altruistic, Stoic-inspired view of justice embraced the virtue of kindness, the constituent parts of which were goodwill and generosity, as its corollary. "It is therefore excellent to wish well and to make donations ('largiri')," said Ambrose, "with the single intent to do good ('prodesse') and not do harm ('nocere'). For if you think that one ought to give an extravagant man the means to live extravagantly, or an adulterer the money for his adultery, that is not an act of kindness ('beneficentia'), for there would be no goodwill ('benevolentia') in it … Nor is this consistent with generosity ('liberalitas') if you help him who settles disputes against widows and orphans or attempts to seize their property by force."[81] Justice and compassion were not principles to be applied abstractly, for the particular circumstances demanded a new weighing of the scales each time. Given how variable individual circumstances

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[77] Augustine, *Conf.* 3.8.15, PL 32, 689.

[78] Augustine, ibid.

[79] Augustine, ibid. 689–690.

[80] Augustine, ibid. 3.7.13, PL 32, 689. 'Numquid iustitia varia est et mutabilis? Sed temporibus quibus praesidet, non pariter eunt; tempora enim sunt.'

[81] Ambrose, *De officiis ministrorum*, 1.144, PL 16, 65B/C.

were, faith, not kindness and compassion, was the principle of any Christian conception of justice, "for the hearts of the just ponder faith, and the just man that accuses himself sets justice on top of faith, for his justice is evident when he confesses the truth."[82] Because Christ was the object of faith, he was not only the source of and basis for the ethical quality of human action,[83] but the foundation of the church as well. As "the form of justice, the common law of all,"[84] the church, having been built upon that stable foundation, was meant to embody all the principles of justice that it had inherited from its origins.

This way of construing justice certainly appealed to Leo, whose hierarchical ordering of the church replaced the rational cosmology of the Stoic world with a system of discipline and clemency that was to be dispensed in equal measure by men whose characters were just.[85] The discipline of the church was the ecclesiastical rules, including the canons, and the apostolic and papal decretals, as well as the punishment that ensued when members of the clergy violated them. Clemency was the practice of mercy, the innate understanding of the vagaries of human justice that enabled those in power to mitigate their judgments with kindness. They were to remember that "no one should dare to deny the forgiveness for another's sins that he wishes to receive for his own."[86] The rules of the church in the section that follows were, for Leo, the "outward form of justice" that Ambrose described, the discipline of the church that prevented its underlying order (i.e., the divine justice of its foundation) from being overturned by the greed, ambition, and even ignorance of its clergy.[87] To the extent that the principle of equity can be seen operating there, that persons of different status were to receive the same treatment under the law, that no one was to seek his or her advantage at the expense of another, that "each was to be commended for works and not for his efforts," it is probably due to the Stoic principles adopted by Ambrose that Leo selectively modified. This new conception of justice tempered the cold rationality of Stoic objectivity with

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[82] Ibid. 1.142, PL 16, 64C/D.

[83] Cf. Ibid.

[84] Ibid. 'Ecclesia autem quaedam forma iustitiae est. Commune ius omnium.' "The church moreover is a certain form of justice. It is the common law of all."

[85] Leo, *Serm.* 49.5, 17 February 457(?)

[86] Leo, *Serm.* 49.5, 17 February 457(?) 'nemo audeat alterius delictis veniam denegare, quam pro suis optat accipere.'

[87] cf. Leo, *Ep.* 12, 10 August 446, *Cum de ordinationibus*, Jaffé 410.

the fluidity of Christian mercy and kindness.[88] How such ideals played out in reality will be considered in the final section.

2. *Ecclesiastical law as the expression of justice*

In the first letter of his episcopacy, which Leo composed in 442 (?) to address the presence of Pelagians in the North Italian city of Aquileia, he identified the two most significant sources of ecclesiastical law that were the basis for the authority he intended to exercise: canons ('canones') and papal decretals ('decreta'). The former were the product of conciliar decision-making, and included the canons of the ecumenical councils of Nicaea (325), Constantinople I (381), Ephesus (431), and eventually Chalcedon (451), as well as those of certain provincial councils, the most important for establishing ecclesiastical law in the West being the Councils of Sardica (342/3), Aquileia (381), and Carthage (419). The latter were decisions (i.e., derived from the Latin verb 'decernere') made by popes in response to a query about a particular situation, the resolution of which had generally eluded the local ecclesiastical hierarchy.[89]

Like the Roman secular law, the ecclesiastical law incorporated a system of precedent that facilitated the law's continuing formation.[90] New papal decretals, which then became authoritative, resulted from the application of prior scriptural ordinances, conciliar canons, and papal decretals to particular cases. Philosophically, the ecclesiastical law was also similar to that of the Roman jurists, who only occassionally permitted the civil law to be superseded by a *ius naturale*,[91] and who introduced the concepts of *aequitas* and *bona fides* in order to shape the *ad hoc* nature of the civil law with the softer contours of justice. The influence of the Roman law combined with that of the Stoic concept of justice to imbue the ecclesiastical law with the principles of mercy and kindness. This amalgamation meant that the practical application of

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[88] Ambrose, *De Officiis Ministrorum*, 2.122, PL 16, 135C.

[89] J. Gaudemet, *Les Sources du Droit de l'Église en Occident du IIe au VIIe Siècle* (Bar-le-Duc, France, 1985), p. 58.

[90] On the use of precedent in the Roman law, see Harries, *Cicero and the Jurists*, pp. 236–238.

[91] P.A. Vander Waerdt, "Philosophical Influences on Roman Jurisprudence?" *ANRW* 2, 36 (1994), p. 4894; on the occasional exceptions, see Harries, *Cicero and the Jurists*, p. 57.

the law was never as inflexible as the claims for its unyielding authority implied.

Consider the case of the wandering Pelagians, the priests, deacons, and lower clergy mentioned earlier who had left their native province of Aquileia to travel to the neighboring regions of northern Italy, including the city of Altino, whose bishop, Septimus, eventually reported the problem to Leo. By leaving their province, priests and clergy such as these were thought to spread their recalcitrant views.[92] A number of canons were relevant here: canon 15 of the Council of Nicaea made it unlawful for bishops, presbyters, or deacons to leave the church in which they were ordained;[93] the Council of Sardica (342/3) excommunicated bishops who transferred their sees;[94] and canon 38 of the third Council of Carthage (397) explicitly brought the secular authority to bear upon the matter by making the governor of the province from which a bishop had transferred his see responsible for returning him to his original see.[95] (An exception to this general rule was later recognized by the fourth Council of Carthage (475), which acknowledged that bishops could transfer their sees if a provincial synod determined that doing so would be useful to the church.)[96] Together these canons were the foundation on which Leo fashioned a new and more wide-reaching papal decretal. He reasoned that rules that prevented the 'innocent', i.e., those whose views had not 'wandered' ('errare') from orthodoxy, from leaving their churches should be applied much more adamantly to those, such as the Pelagians, whose orthodoxy had been compromised. Even bishops who had simply *received* the Pelagian priests, deacons, and clergy from the province of Aquileia, and not only the hierarchy of the original province, were considered to have violated the ecclesiastical law. Four years later, Leo made this ruling apply more generally so that bishops were *never* to receive the clergy of another diocese, whether or not he was orthodox, without the explicit consent of both the original diocese and the one that was slated to receive him.[97] This was later understood by Leo's successor, Hilary I, in the uncompromising

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[92] Leo, *Ep.* 1.1, 442 (?), Jaffé 398; *Ep.* 14.9, 14.10, c. 6 January 446, *Quanta fraternitati*, Jaffé 411.

[93] Council of Nicaea, canon 15, Joannou, I, 1, pp. 36–37.

[94] Council of Sardica, canons 1 and 2, Joannou, I, 2, pp. 175–176.

[95] Council of Carthage 3, August 397, canon 38, ed. C. Munier, *Concilia Africae, a. 345 – a. 525*, CCSL 149 (Turnhout, 1974), pp. 335–336.

[96] Council of Carthage 4, c. 475, canon 27, Ibid. p. 346.

[97] Leo, *Ep.* 14.10, c. 6 January 446, Jaffé 411.

manner in which it was intended: when Hilary was asked to recognize the transfer of a Spanish bishop from one see to another, he refused, despite the fact that the people and clergy of the province supported such a change and considered it useful for the church.[98]

The election and ordination of bishops and clergy were governed by a developing body of law designed to preserve the status and quality of the sacerdotal offices. These were the men whose character was to fill the content of the ecclesiastical law with the principles of justice.[99] The canons and the ordinances of the divine law, meaning Scripture, were to be interpreted together in order to ensure that only those bishops and lower clergy were elected who were thought to have led commendable lives, having been "instructed in the ecclesiastical discipline over the course of many years," and who, for that reason, might administer that discipline fairly.[100] To protect the status of the office, Leo prohibited from serving in the priesthood slaves and serfs who had not been freed by their masters. Ordaining persons in such a servile status was thought to sully the church and to infringe upon the rights of masters,[101] because it divided the loyalties of those whose duty was to serve not only the church, but another human being. Though undoubtedly harsh to modern sensibilities, this view of servitude as being incompatible with the responsibilities of ecclesiastical service[102] had its roots in the earliest Christian writings. Even those such as the Apostle Paul, who consciously subordinated the temporal to the spiritual realm, never questioned the fact that a master, Paul's friend and co-worker Philemon, needed to free his slave, Onesimus, in a manner consistent with Roman law before he, Onesimus, could be of service to Paul.[103] By no later than the middle of the fourth century that ruling found its way into the Apostolic Canons, a collection of early canons that purported to derive its authority from the apostles. There canon 82 decreed that "if any servant should appear worthy of receiving an order, as our Onesimus appeared, and his masters agree, and liberate him, and send him out of

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[98] Hilary, *Ep.* 2.2, PL 58, 18A.

[99] See chapter 2.1.

[100] Leo, *Ep.* 6.3, 12 January 444, *Omnium quidem litteras*, Jaffé 404. Hasty ordinations were to be avoided because admitting to ecclesiastical service those who had not progressed through the ranks of office was thought to prejudice unfairly those who had undergone the necessary training. Leo, *Ep.* 12.2, 10 August 446, Jaffé 410.

[101] Leo, *Ep.* 4.1, 10 October 443, *Ut nobis gratulationem*, Jaffé 402.

[102] See e.g. Paul, *Ep.* to Philemon; Apostolic Canons, canon 82, Joannou, I, 2, pp. 49–50.

[103] Paul, *Ep.* to Philemon.

their house, he may be ordained." The Council of Elvira (c. 309) construed this rule in narrow terms by prohibiting freedmen whose former patrons were still alive from being ordained to the clergy.[104] In supposing the master-slave relationship to continue until the master's death, the council may have reasoned that ecclesiastical law should be more rigorous than the Roman secular law. Only upon the death of the master was the former slave eligible for ecclesiastical office, because only then was he severed from his earthly ties. That Leo knew or approved of such a canon seems unlikely, for his rule implied that the duty of a former slave to his master would not be jeopardized so long as he had been freed in accordance with the secular law.

An abiding concern for the moral purity of the priesthood characterized Leo's decretals on clerical celibacy. Since at least the time of pope Damasus, Rome applied Paul's injunction, "Let those who have wives live as though they had none (1 Cor 7:29)," to bishops, priests, and deacons, thereby imposing the requirement of continence upon clerical marriages. Leo made the same ruling apply to subdeacons, a Roman practice that was gradually extended to all the Western churches.[105] Clerical marriages were further circumscribed by the prohibition against second marriages, known as bigamy.[106] Ecclesiastical law beginning with the Apostolic Canons, and theologians as early as Tertullian, had made Paul's injunction to marry only once, and the additional charge of Leviticus, to marry only virgins, accepted by the Western churches.[107] Together the laws suggested that the general proscription against bigamy applied equally to the status of wives taken by the bishops and clergy. They were prohibited from marrying widows, whose prior status as married women made their lack of virginity a foregone conclusion: "If then even in the Old Testament this form of marriage among priests is observed, how much more ought we, who are placed under the grace of the Gospel, serve the apostolic precepts?

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[104] Council of Elvira, canon 80, Mansi 2, 19.

[105] Though sub-deacons were not within the ranks of the clergy, they were urged to remain continent. Leo, *Ep.* 14.4, c. 6 January 446, Jaffé 411. J. Gaudemet, *L'église de l'empire Romain* (IVe–Ve siècles), p. 157. The same was true of those who ministered at the altar (whom Quesnel, in fact, understood to mean sub-deacons). Such persons were to remain married, but to practice continence. Leo, *Ep.* 167.3, 458/9 (?), *Epistolas fraternitatis*, Jaffé 544.

[106] On bigamy among the laity and clergy, see generally H. Crouzel, "Les digamoi visés par le concile de Nicée dans son canon 8," *Augustinianum* 18 (1978), pp. 533–546.

[107] See e.g. Tertullian, *De exhortatione castitatis*, 7, PL 2, 922.

… [A man] may not ascend to the rank of deacon, or to the dignity of the priesthood, or to the highest episcopal rank if it has been established either that he himself is not the husband of one wife, or that his wife is not [the wife] of one husband."[108] That men who married widows were not to be admitted to the sacerdotal order was a ruling that Leo adduced from "the teaching of the Apostle, divine precept, and the regulations of the canons."[109] He was correct on all counts: Paul (i.e., 'the Apostle') said that a bishop, among other qualities considered to be essential for the office, should have married only once (1 Tim 3:2); the code of Leviticus (i.e., 'divine precept') plainly stated that a priest was not to marry a widow (Lev 21:14); canon 25 of the Council of Arles (i.e., 'the canons') prevented clergy from marrying a previously married woman (lit: 'mulier corrupta'); and Siricius confirmed such ordinances with a papal decretal forbidding clergy to remarry or to marry a widow, the penalty for either being removal from office.[110] Because priests were thought to embody the spiritual marriage of Christ to the church, they were, as the spouse of the Word, to remain continent within marriage, to marry only once, and, if possible, to avoid marriage altogether.[111] Given how deliberate such laws governing clerical marriages were, it is telling that Leo did not follow the equally rigorous interpretation that Caelestine had imposed upon the laity. Caelestine had made it an ecclesiastical offense not only for clergy to marry a widow, but for the laity as well: they were admonished for thinking that baptism had any effect on forgiving such an act. Leo shared this restrictive view of the power of baptism by insisting that it could not diminish for a cleric the number of marriages contracted, even though it had the capacity to forgive a multitude of other sins that may have been committed.[112] Both had probably reasoned that only sins were forgiven through the sacrament of baptism, while multiple marriages, which were not sinful acts individually, remained.[113]

It should come as no surprise that Leo permitted laymen who were married at the time of their promotion to the office of bishop to

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[108] Leo, *Ep.* 12.3, 10 August 446, Jaffé 410.

[109] Leo, *Ep.* 4.3, 10 October 443, Jaffé 402; *Ep.* 5.3, 12 January 444, *Omnis admonitio*, Jaffé 403.

[110] Innocent I, *Ep.* 2.4–5, PL 20, 473–474; idem. *Ep.* 2.6, PL 20, 474–475; Siricius, *Ep.* 1.11, PL 13, 1143; Gaudemet, *L'église de l'empire Romain*, p. 157.

[111] Cf. Leo, *Ep.* 12.3, 10 August 446, Jaffé 410.

[112] Innocent I/Dionysius Exiguus, *Collectio decretorum*, 13, PL 67, 243A.

[113] Leo, *Ep.* 6.3, 12 January 444, Jaffé 404.

continue to hold that office. He argued that a person was not culpable who could not have known when he married that he would later serve as bishop.[114] In the light of the prevalence of marriage among the clergy, the fear was not of undermining the ideal of clerical celibacy, but that married laymen who were elevated to the episcopal office, having failed to advance through the lower clerical orders, had been too recently entangled in worldly affairs. Avoiding the disruption either to the familial life of the community, which might result from making a newly elected bishop repudiate his wife, or to the community's sense of ecclesiastical continuity from insisting on his immediate resignation, must have outweighed the benefits of strictly upholding the ideal of an orderly clerical advancement.

The practice of lending money for profit, known as usury, was, in accordance with the tenor of Scripture (Ps. 15.5), the prophets, and the Gospels, prohibited many times over not only for the clergy, but also for the laity.[115] Until the emperor Leo I legislated against it, however, the secular laws had permitted the practice, as Augustine made clear in one of his letters.[116] That Leo followed the well-established ecclesiastical interpretation imposed by the Councils of Elvira (309) and Carthage (348) and by the Apostolic (4th c.) and African (419) canons in proscribing this method of monetary gain also for the laity signals how much he despised the business of money-making as being contrary to the spirit of generosity and altruism that was the benchmark for Christian behavior: "we ought to regard and practice only this usury, so that what we bestow here in mercy ('misericorditer') we may be able to recover from that Lord, who repays many times over and forever and ever."[117] Another problem was the bishops, such as those already mentioned in Tauromenium and Panormus, Sicily, who had left their congregations destitute by squandering the church estates, either selling, giving away, or otherwise disposing of property that had been bequeathed to the church. Because rents from such properties were the main source of income for the churches, bishops who managed them improperly

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[114] Leo, *Ep.* 12.5, 10 August 446, Jaffé 410.

[115] See, e.g., Apostolic Canons, canon 44, Joannou, I, 2, p. 30. R.P. Maloney, "Early conciliar legislation on usury: a contribution to the study of Christian moral thinking," *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 39 (1972), pp. 145–157.

[116] Augustine, *Ep.* 153, PL 33, 665A.

[117] Leo, *Ep.* 4.4, 10 October 443, Jaffé 402. Leo's decretal was the foundation for Medieval legislation against usury. Maloney, "Early conciliar legislation on usury," p. 156.

were likely to throw the ecclesiastical finances into disarray.[118] That it was the bishop, in particular, who administered the funds of the church was a well-established principle for as long as the church had funds to administer. Already by the middle of the fourth century, the Council of Antioch (341) recognized in this practice the possibility for abuse. Bishops were to manage the revenues of the church, including rent from the farms, in consultation with the presbyters and deacons, but not with their relatives and household members, whose potential for undue profit automatically excluded them from sharing in financial concerns.[119] Consistent with this conciliar restraint upon episcopal power, Leo decreed not only that the bishops, but the entire clergy was to advance the interests of the church by giving its consent before any properties were disposed of.[120] Because it undermined the functioning of the church, squandering property, whether or not for personal gain, was an offense punishable by excommunication.

In all other instances, Leo acknowledged the special place of the bishop in a pyramidal structure that validated the preferences expressed at the local level with the approval of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Bishops were to be elected by the clergy; demanded by the laity; consecrated by the bishops of the province; and confirmed by the metropolitan.[121] Failure to adhere to that process made the election illegitimate, and ordinations carried out by such a "bishop" were valid only in the church in which they had been originally celebrated.[122] The principles of the electoral process were thereby upheld without disrupting the continuity of ecclesiastical authority in the region. Sometimes, bishops were demanded by the laity amid disorder and strife, as they were in the North African province of Mauritania, where several episcopal appointments had been made in response to civil unrest. By the very

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[118] See A.H.M. Jones, "Church finance in the fifth and sixth centuries," *JTS* 11 (1960), pp. 84–94, esp. pp. 84–85.

[119] Council of Antioch, canon 25, Mansi, 2, 1320; Joannou, I, 2, pp. 125–126.

[120] Leo, *Ep.* 17, 21 October 447, *Occasio specalium*, Jaffé 415.

[121] Leo, *Ep.* 167.1, 458/9 (?), Jaffé 544. See R. Gryson, "Les élections épiscopales en occident au IVe siècles," *RHE* 75 (1980), pp. 414–415, 422–423.

[122] Leo, *Ep.* 167.1, 458/9 (?), Jaffé 544. That was exactly what happened in Southern Gaul in c. 458/9, when Rusticus was the bishop of Narbonne. Leo decreed that men who had not been properly elected were not to be counted among the bishops. The ordinations of clergy who had been ordained by such false bishops would be held valid if that ordination had received the approval and consent of the presiding bishop for that church. If there were no presiding bishop, or if he had not consented, then the ordination was not considered valid.

nature of their disordered election, Leo considered such bishops to be unworthy of the office.[123] Since at least the time of Cyprian, however, the voice of the people had been given considerable weight in the electoral process. Although it was the authority of the bishops that effectuated the judgment of God, the testimony of the people determined whether an episcopal candidate was suitable.[124] Under the rubric of 'the people', pope Boniface I understood those other than the clergy and the senate.[125] Leo generally agreed: the people ('populi') were the citizens ('civis') whom he distinguished from the 'honorati' and the 'clergy'.[126] Together, under the direction of the clergy, they decided whether an episcopal candidate was qualified for office.[127] If two men received an equal number of votes, then the metropolitan, taking into account the wishes of the people, was to select the candidate who was deemed the most deserving.[128] According to the councils of Africa, however, the ecclesiastical hierarchy, but not the testimony and consent of the people, determined the outcome of episcopal elections.[129] Assigning less of a role to the people probably addressed the oftentimes vociferous and sometimes violent debates that surrounded elections in the region.[130] Leo himself refused to allow the testimony of the people to elect to the episcopal office a layman, a man who had married a sec-

[123] Leo, *Ep.* 12.1, 10 August 446, Jaffé 410. 'mirantes tantum apud vos per occasionem temporis impacati, aut ambientium praesumptionem, aut tumultum valuisse popularem, ut indignis quibusque et longe extra sacerdotale meritum constitutis pastorale fastigium et gubernatio Ecclesiae dederetur.' Potentius had reported to Leo what sort of men were being chosen to govern the churches of the Caesariensis province: "We are surprised," said Leo, "that either the arrogance of ambition or a popular riot held so much weight with you in a time of disorder that the chief pastorate and the governing of the church was handed over to unworthy men who fell far short of the priestly standard."

[124] Cyprian, in Cornelius, *Ep.* 10 (84), PL 3, 796 (771C).

[125] Boniface, *Ep.* 12.1, PL 20, 772A, citing Caelestine, *Ep.* 4, n. 7, ibid. 772B; also cited by P. Quesnel, *Dissertatio quinta*, PL 55, 504A/B.

[126] Leo, *Ep.* 10.4. These three groups he further divided between two categories, the 'faithful' ('fidelium'), meaning the 'clergy', and 'those who are without' ('qui foris sunt'). Both groups were to participate in episcopal elections. Cf. Cyprian, *Ep.* 40.7; Leo, *Ep.* 10.6, *Ep.* 40.

[127] Leo, *Ep.* 10.6. "He who is to govern all should be chosen by all."

[128] Leo, *Ep.* 14.5, c. 6 January 446, Jaffé 411. The rationale was that forcing a city to accept a bishop whom they did not choose might lead them to abandon religion altogether.

[129] Ferrandus the Deacon, *Ferrandi Ecclesiae Carthaginensis diaconi breviatio canonum a. 523–546*, 11, where the will of the hierarchy ('matrix') sufficed to elect a bishop.

[130] On the violence surrounding the election of Fulgentius' successor, see *Vita S. Fulgentii*, 1 Januarii, 30 (75). Cf. Ferrandus the Deacon, *Ferrandi Ecclesiae Carthaginensis diaconi*

ond wife, a neophyte, or a man who had married a widow.[131] When he reprimanded the Mauritanian bishops for permitting the voice of the people to carry so much weight, he implicitly acknowledged that they had departed from local custom and law.

Even among legitimate bishops who had been elected properly, some enjoyed greater status than others according to the model that had existed among the apostles, in which one was permitted "to stand out above the rest," though similar honor was given to each.[132] Justifying the disparity among bishops in parallel terms, Leo imagined a hierarchy in which bishops exercised a degree of power that varied according to the size of the city they governed. Those in charge of provinces were the bishops known as metropolitans, whose responsibility was to oversee the episcopal elections mentioned above and to preside over provincial councils.[133] Larger regions, known in the secular administration as dioceses, were governed by a vicar, whose wide-reaching authority embodied, on the one hand, the self-conscious intrusion of the authority of Rome, and, on the other, the logical extension of a hierarchical model that had been put into place by the canons of the Council of Nicaea.[134] To diminish the influence of the schismatic bishop, Meletius, canon 6, following the powers exercised by the bishop of Rome, confirmed the long-standing practice that had given to the bishop of Alexandria the authority to administer all of Egypt, Libya, and the Pentapolis.[135] What that authority consisted in precisely we do not know, although Synesius, the bishop of Ptolemaioi, the capital of Pentapolis, remarked in two of his letters that he confirmed the bishops elected in his province, while the bishop of Alexandria ordained them.[136] From a papal decretal of Innocent I (pope, 401–417) we learn that he, following the model of the church of Rome, advised Alexander, the patriarch of Antioch, that he should personally consecrate the metropolitans, but only confirm

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breviatio canonum a. 523–546, 198, where an accused man who feared violence could select another forum.

131 Leo, *Ep.* 14.3, c. 6 January 446, Jaffé 411.

132 Leo, *Ep.* 14.11, c. 6 January 446, Jaffé 411.

133 Gaudemet, *L'église de l'empire Romain*, p. 381.

134 The same term 'vicar' was used to denote the secular official who governed a diocese and the ecclesiastical person who represented the pope.

135 Council of Nicaea, canon 6, Joannou, I, 1, pp. 28–29.

136 Synesius of Cyrene, *Epp.* 67 (66), 76, ed. A. Garzya, *Synesii Cyrenensis Epistolae* (Rome, 1979), pp. 108–109, 135.

the consecration of the bishops under the metropolitans' command.[137] That is the papal decretal that Leo must have had in mind when he assigned to the vicar of Thessaloniki the authority to oversee all the episcopal elections in the province,[138] consecrating personally each of the metropolitans and confirming every episcopal ordination that the metropolitans had made.[139]

Social and ecclesiastical challenges were raised by the entry of the Vandals and Huns into the West. Among the more disturbing were the consecrated virgins, nuns who had been raped by these intractable settlers.[140] Distinguishing such circumstances from those commented upon by Cyprian and Jerome, in which virgins who had lost their virginity carelessly were given the status of widows, Leo said that those who had been raped by barbarians were neither to be demoted to the rank of holy widow nor to be counted among the virgins.[141] Although he acknowledged that their mind ('mens') had not been conquered by the defilement of their flesh, insofar as sin arises from desire ('voluntas'), he argued that their status, nevertheless, had changed, their body having lost "what they could not lose in their spirit."[142] As long as they continued "to persevere in the virgin life," however, they were not to be denied participation in the sacraments.[143] That was a studied departure from the precedent set by the Council of Elvira (c. 309), in which con-

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[137] Innocent, *Ep.* 24.1, PL 20, 548. On Innocent's contribution to the formation of a papal vicariate in Thessaloniki, see Gaudemet, *L'église de l'empire Romain*, p. 405.

[138] Leo, *Ep.* 5.6, 12 January 444, *Omnis admonitio*, Jaffé 403. Although the metropolitans of the province were to hold ordinary episcopal elections, the final authority rested with the vicar, who was to appeal any difficult cases to Rome. See generally F. Streichhahn, "Die Anfänge des Vikariates von Thessalonich," *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte. Kanonistische Abteilung* 12 (1922), pp. 330–384; W. Völker, "Studien zur päpstlichen Vikariatspolitik im 5. Jahrhundert," *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 46 (1927), pp. 370–380; S.L. Greenslade, "The Illyrian churches and the vicariate of Thessalonica: 378–395," *JTS* 46 (1945), pp. 17–30; J. Macdonald, "Who instituted the Papal Vicariate of Thessalonica?" *SP* 4 (1961), pp. 478–482.

[139] Leo, *Ep.* 6.4, 12 January 444, Jaffé 404.

[140] Note that Leo distinguishes virgins who have taken the habit from those who have been consecrated. Even the former were guilty of wrongdoing if they married. R. Metz, *La consécration des vierges dans l'église romaine: étude d'histoire de la liturgie* (Paris, 1954), p. 89. See B. Ward-Perkins, *The Fall of Rome and the End of Civilization* (Oxford, 2005), especially "The Horrors of War," pp. 13–31, esp. p. 13, on this decretal.

[141] Cyprian, *Liber de habitu virginum*, 20, PL 4, 459A; Jerome, *Epistula ad Eustochium*, 13, PL 22, 401.

[142] Leo, *Ep.* 12.8, 10 August 446, Jaffé 410.

[143] Leo, *Ep.* 12.11, 10 August 446, Jaffé 410.

secrated virgins who married were declared to be adulterers, for they were considered, first and foremost, to have been married to Christ. By applying the principle of moderation ('moderatio'), Leo carved out an exception for virgins who had been defiled in the body, but not in the spirit ('animus'), their mind ('mens') never having acquiesced to the violence that the Vandals and Huns had committed against them.

The state of mind of the so-called sinner did not suffice entirely to forgive a transgression until Leo confronted the problem of rebaptism. In northern Italy, some people had been taken captive by the army of Attila the Hun at such a young age that they could not recall whether they had ever been baptized.[144] A similar situation prevailed in the churches of southern Gaul.[145] The injunction that baptism should not be repeated had its roots in Paul's letter to the Ephesians, which stated simply: "one Lord, one faith, one baptism."[146] Cyprian in the third century generally upheld that view (except in the case of the Novatians), which was confirmed by the Synod of Carthage (397), and restated twenty-two years later by the African canons (419), where rebaptisms were forbidden, as well as reordinations and the translation of bishops.[147] Fully aware that permitting a second baptism might be construed as violating these apostolic and conciliar decrees, Leo held that baptism should be administered to prisoners of war who, unable to recall whether they had received the rite, had either escaped from or been released by their captors. As long as no witness could be found to confirm that the rite had been performed, such persons were not only permitted, but encouraged, to receive it.[148] No possibility for sinning existed when neither the clergy who was to perform the rite nor he who was to receive it had any knowledge of whether baptism had previously occurred. A similar reasoning governed the case of infants abandoned by Christian parents. Where no memory of baptism could be retrieved, either by the person or by witnesses, repetition of the rite was thought to be logically impossible.[149]

Why were such cases different from the defilement of the consecrated virgins? Although maintaining an innocent mind did not excuse

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[144] Leo, *Ep.* 166.1, 24 October 458, *Frequenter quidem*, Jaffé 543.
[145] Leo, *Ep.* 167.17, 458/9 (?), Jaffé 544.
[146] *Eph.* 4:5. Leo, *Ep.* 159.8, 21 March 458, *Regressus ad nos*, Jaffé 536.
[147] Dionysius Exiguus, *African Canons*, *Codex canonum ecclesiasticorum*, canon 48, PL 67, 195D–196A; Mansi 3, 738.
[148] Leo, *Ep.* 166.1, 24 October 458, Jaffé 543.
[149] Leo, *Ep.* 167.16, 458/9 (?), Jaffé 544.

the virgins, it did excuse the former prisoners of war who had unwittingly received two baptisms: "What is not known to have been done at all [i.e., baptism] cannot come under the charge of repetition."[150] The most likely explanation is that refusing to permit a second baptism might result in excluding such persons, who had already suffered greatly, from participating fully in the sacraments. Although the virgins who had been raped were, in spite of their mental innocence, no longer to be counted among the undefiled, they were not to be excluded from communion. Perhaps equally significant from Leo's point of view was that the African Canons (419) had confronted a similar legal problem when barbarians entered North Africa. Children who had been taken captive were, upon their return—thanks to the Moorish legates who redeemed them—to be given the rite of baptism, so that "failure to do so would not deprive them of the cleansing of the sacraments."[151] Leo later decreed that baptism was acceptable for such children as long as no one could be found to testify that the rite had already been performed. To illustrate how strict the rule against second baptism really was, Leo proscribed it for those who had been baptized improperly by heretics. He reasoned that the imposition of the bishop's hands would confer the Holy Spirit, which had been lacking before.[152] Leniency was still generally the rule when unintentional errors occurred. If baptism was inadvertently repeated by one who later acknowledged having violated the ecclesiastical discipline, then such a person was to be received into full communion with the church, but only after he or she had received penitence and the imposition of the bishop's hands.

A satisfactory penance also excused former prisoners of war who had eaten the sacrificial food that had been offered to them by their barbarian captors.[153] As long as they had taken the food because of fear ('metus') or hunger ('indigentia'), and not as an expression of 'religious devotion' ('pro religionis veneratione'), such persons were to be readmitted to communion with the church after performing a sincere

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[150] Leo, *Ep.* 166.1, 24 October 458, Jaffé 543. 'non potest in iterationis crimen venire, quod factum esse omnino nescitur.'

[151] Dionysius Exiguus, *African Canons*, *Codex canonum ecclesiasticorum*, canon 72, PL 67, 205B; Mansi 3, 775.

[152] Leo, *Ep.* 166.2, 24 October 458, Jaffé 543. The Ballerini have connected this with the *impositio in paenitentiam* mentioned by Cyprian and others.

[153] See O.D. Watkins, *A history of penance: being a study of the authorities* (London, New York, 1920), vol. 1, p. 422.

penance.[154] A more stringent rule applied to those who had worshipped idols, or committed murder or fornication. They were to be admitted to communion only after performing public penance ('poenitentia publica').[155] A similar way of construing the matter had already been advised by Gregory Thaumaturgus, the bishop of Neocaesarea, whose canonical epistle, addressed to every bishop of his province, tackled the problems of ecclesiastical discipline that had been raised by the Goths' invasion of Asia Minor during the reign of Galienus.[156] Even more forgiving than Leo's decretal, Gregory's canon treated persons who had unwillingly eaten sacrificial foods—assuming they had not worshipped idols—as if the incident had never occurred. He was similarly "generous" to ordinary women who had been raped by the Goths: they were not guilty of having engaged in sexual activity unless their prior life had been lascivious.

The disruption to familial life caused by the barbarian invasions is strikingly evident in the series of decretals pertaining to the status of marriages that had been disrupted by the Huns' invasion of northern Italy. Numerous men in the region had been carried off as prisoners of war, their wives left alone to manage the family. Believing their husbands to be either dead or unlikely ever to be freed by their captors, many of the women, "compelled by loneliness," as Leo put it, or perhaps under the strain of economic necessity, remarried. When the improbable happened and their husbands returned, such women were in a quandary from which Leo did little to extricate them. Because of the teaching from Scripture that "a woman is joined to a man by God" and "what God has joined, man may not put asunder," he insisted that the first marriage should be renewed.[157] His reasoning was that legal obligations should be honored in order to restore life in the region as nearly as possible to conditions prior to the barbarian invasions. A contract like any other, marriage made the wife into the property of the husband. The legal bonds of marriage were not so strong as to

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[154] Leo, *Ep.* 159.5, 21 March 458, Jaffé 536.

[155] Leo, *Ep.* 167.19, 458/9 (?), Jaffé 544.

[156] Gregory Thaumaturgus (of Neocaesarea), *Epistula canonica*, canon 1, PG 10, 1020, 1021.

[157] Leo, *Ep.* 159.1, 1 March 458, Jaffé 536. See Prov. 19:14; Matt. 19:6. On the disparity between men and women, see C. Munier, "Divorce, remariage et pénitence dans l'église primitive," *RevSR* 52 (1978), pp. 81–117, which finds that men who divorced an adulterous wife were permitted to remarry, while women in the same situation were not. See also Ward-Perkins, *The Fall of Rome*, pp. 23–24.

impose them upon a man against his will: a former captive was not obliged to rejoin his wife unless, after returning from his long captivity, he still felt affection for her.[158] The second husband, who had contracted what seemed at the time to be a lawful marriage, had neither a legal claim against the first husband, nor liability for having violated the bonds of the first marriage. They were blameless because "many things that belonged to those who were led into captivity could pass into the possession of another, and yet it is altogether just that, when these men return, their property should be restored."[159] In addition to slaves, lands, houses, and personal goods, that "property" included wives.[160] Unfortunately for women, their preferences were irrelevant. If she refused to rejoin her former husband, then she who continued to live in a state of incontinence was to be excluded from communion. The unavoidable impression left from the totality of such decretals is that the first marriage was restored at the discretion of the first husband who had been released unexpectedly from his barbarian captors. Even the Roman law civil had been more humane in permitting the original marriage to be reinstated only if the parties agreed.[161] Leo was, however, more attentive to the nuances of human relationships than Innocent I, who addressed the similar case of a woman who had been held in captivity and then returned to find that her husband had remarried. Because the first wife was still living, and had not been sent away by divorce, the first marriage was declared to be valid, whether or not the man's affection remained.[162]

Leo did nothing to improve upon the civil laws governing the rights of concubines, and, in fact, rescinded the rights that the Council of Toledo (401) had granted.[163] Questions had arisen in southern Gaul

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[158] Leo, *Ep.* 159.3, 1 March 458, Jaffé 536.

[159] Leo, *Ep.* 159.2, 1 March 458, Jaffé 536. 'Sic enim multa quae ad eos qui incaptivitatem ducti sunt pertinebant in jus alienum transire potuerunt, et tamen plenum justitiae est ut eisdem reversis propria reformentur.'

[160] P.L. Reynolds, *Marriage in the Western Church. The Christianization of Marriage During the Patristic and Early Medieval Periods* (Leiden, 1994).

[161] Reynolds, *Marriage in the Western Church*, pp. 44–46.

[162] Innocent, *Ep.* 36, PL 20, 602B. See P. Nautin, "Divorce et remariage dans la tradition de l'église latine," *RSR* 62 (1974), pp. 7–54, esp. pp. 42–44; H. Crouzel, *L'église primitive face au divorce: du premier au cinquième siècle* (Paris, 1970), pp. 303–304. These decretals were significantly more rigorous than the secular law, which permitted women whose husbands had been missing for at least four years to remarry. T. Mackin, *Divorce and remarriage* (New York, 1984), p. 98.

[163] Cf. the Council of Toledo, c. 17, which improves the rights of concubines, in

regarding the status of a woman whose father, whether a presbyter, deacon, or layman, had given her in marriage to a man already joined to a concubine by whom he had children.[164] Citing the well-established civil law that marriage was legitimate only between the freeborn and equals, Leo reasoned that a wife, being free, was different from a concubine, whose status as a bond woman prevented her from ever entering into a marriage that was legitimate under Roman law.[165] Unless the concubine had since been freed, had acquired a legitimate dowry, and had been honored by public nuptials, the new wife need not fear that she had entered into a union with a married man. The concubine, in her current status, had no legal recourse even if she produced children: the man was permitted, and even encouraged, to leave her if he should decide to take a free woman as his wife. His reasoning was, perhaps, that concubinage, being a clandestine relationship which had not been honored with a public celebration, should not invalidate as adulterous a second marriage that had taken place within the institution of the church.[166]

In the matter of penitence Leo was more accommodating.[167] It had long been acknowledged that those who confessed to sinning after baptism were forgiven and readmitted to communion by the grace of penitence, which was administered by priests who were thought to have received the power to forgive through Christ.[168] To be effective, penitence had to be granted while the person was living, so that he or she might confess the sins secretly to a priest. No exceptions were made even for those who had promised to repent, but had died before the priest could administer communion: an untimely death did not change the fact that such persons were not in communion.[169] It was a commonplace by late Roman times that penitence and reconciliation were never to be refused to those on their deathbed.[170] That is why Leo made every effort to honor the wishes of the dying, granting penitence

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R. Kottje, "Konkubinat und Kommunionwürdigkeit im vorgratianischen Kirchenrecht," *AHC* 7 (1975), p. 160. See Gaudemet, *L'église de l'empire Romain*, pp. 538–539.

[164] Leo, Ep. 167.4–6, 458/9 (?), Jaffé 544. Reynolds, *Marriage in the Western Church*, pp. 162–167.

[165] Reynolds, *Marriage in the Western Church*, pp. 38–40.

[166] Crouzel, *L'église primitive face au divorce*, pp. 307–308.

[167] Watkins, *A History of Penance*, pp. 418–423.

[168] Leo, *Ep.* 108.2, 11 June 452, *Sollicitudinis quidem tuae*, Jaffé 485.

[169] Leo, *Ep.* 167.8, 458/9 (?), Jaffé 544.

[170] Leo, *Ep.* 108.5, 11 June 452, Jaffé 485.

to those who were in such dire straights that they could ask for it only by gesturing.[171] Granting penitence on the deathbed was such a well-accepted practice that witnesses could testify on behalf of those who had managed to express, moments before the priest arrived, what they could no longer convey, by any means, in the presence of the priest. Sometimes persons suffering from the physical pain of illness asked for penitence, and then, upon feeling better, refused to honor the terms of repentance given by the priest.[172] In those instances, Leo urged family, friends, and clergy to encourage the person to carry out in the present that which, under stress, he or she had asked for before. A variant on that theme was the person who called for a priest and then, upon his arrival, refused to accept what was offered. The usual explanation for such a change of heart was that the person's condition had suddenly improved. Leo was lenient in stating that the person was not to be punished, penitence being available later, when "it was more zealously sought."[173] What happened to those who might commit transgressions after penance had been performed was another vexing matter. Being active in the world presented numerous occasions for penitents to commit new sins, especially when they participated in such worldly business as litigating in the law courts, transacting in commerce, returning to military service, and engaging in sexual activity. Penitents were urged to avoid such pitfalls by having recourse to the judgment of the church rather than of the forum; by suffering financial loss rather than risk illicit gains; and by refusing to serve in the military altogether.[174] Marrying a woman after penance was seen as a viable alternative to a life of chastity, for it protected the man who remained faithful to his wife from committing the sin of fornication.

3. *The practical manifestation of justice in the application of mercy*

Such were the papal decretals that governed the conduct of the bishops and clergy, the relationship between husband and wife, the hierarchy of the church, the conflict between Christian and barbarian, and the administering of penitence, as well as any other aspect of ecclesiasti-

[171] Leo, *Ep.* 108.5, 11 June 452, Jaffé 485.
[172] Leo, *Ep.* 167.7, 458/9 (?), Jaffé 544.
[173] Leo, *Ep.* 167.9, 458/9 (?), Jaffé 544.
[174] Leo, *Ep.* 167.10–13, 458/9 (?), Jaffé 544.

cal and familial life that Rome intended to regulate. For a man who was deeply intent on developing a precise set of papal decretals and disciplinary precedents, and who was heir to the catholic view of tradition, along with the devotion to consistency and continuity which that view implied, what is most striking about Leo's way of administering justice was that he did not think that adhering to the letter of the law should decide inevitably the outcome of individual cases. Those who did so were often chastised severely. He thought that justice was better served by taking into account the concrete circumstances of particular cases, and weighing that against the threat to legal coherence and consistency that might result from seeming to bend the ecclesiastical rules. The Roman civil law worked in this way, and it was Leo's innovation to apply that system to the churches.

What happened, though, when people either rejected the theological principles of Rome, or violated the ethical standards of conduct that were thought to govern those who had been elected to serve as bishop or among the clergy? In such instances, Leo's theory of justice and retribution was clear, even while its application was oftentimes murky. The principle of moderation, which was to guide the decisions of the apostolic see, contained the prerogative both to punish those who did not conform to its system of laws and doctrine and to pardon those who submitted to the theological views and to the disciplinary corrections that it required.[175] This principle ameliorated what could have been, had it insisted upon its legal particularities, a harsh system of justice, even for those whose theological views were congenial to Rome.

In practice, it meant that those, such as the Manichaeans, who subscribed to beliefs that were vastly different from those of the apostolic see, received the most severe treatment imaginable. We have already seen how Leo virtually persecuted the sect by having them condemned in both a public and an ecclesiastical trial, after which the secular laws made sure that being a Manichaean would plunge anyone into economic and personal despair. Having been expelled from the city, they were, at Leo's urging, to be hunted down and unearthed by the bishops in the surrounding regions. Anyone who attended church in Rome and its environs was surely aware of this program against them: in one sermon after another, their theological views were condemned and their ritual practices ridiculed, there being little evidence of the mercy

[175] Leo, *Ep.* 31.3, 13 June 449, *Quantum praesidii*, Jaffé 425.

and moderation of the ideology frequently repeated.[176] With a starkly dualistic way of seeing the world that envisioned all matter as evil and denied that Christ's human nature was real, they were perhaps incorrigible, considered to be so far outside the fundamental theological views that most Christians believed were necessary in order to effect salvation that Leo could find no common ground on which to reach them. Because the authority of Rome did not apply in such cases, nor did its principles of justice, moderation, and leniency. Recognizing the authority of Rome and receiving its mercy were mutually enforcing principles, because both implied that the object of mercy had subscribed to a way of construing the cosmological and theological order that was also the foundation for this system of justice. For the Manichaeans that order was so fundamentally different from their own that submitting to it would be to construe the world incorrectly. Rome's application of mercy, which was meant to address the problem of justice posed by human inequity and failing, similarly applied only to those who agreed that human beings, though flawed by the sin of Adam, contained the divine spark that connected them to the order of the universe. In some sense that defied human understanding, that order was considered to be divinely and perfectly just, even though human beings did not have the capacity to embrace it completely. Because human justice was inherently flawed, only a mirror of the divine rationality, the ideals of mercy and moderation were meant to temper the ecclesiastical laws with human compassion.

If Leo reserved the harshest treatment for those whose theological views differed from his own, then it is worth considering the case of Eutyches, the archimandrite of a monastery in Constantinople who insisted that Christ had one, quasi-docetic nature.[177] Although Leo said of Eutyches' christology, "what is so destructive than to wish to destroy all hope of human salvation by denying the truth of Christ's Incarnation?"[178] he, nonetheless, urged Flavian, the bishop of Constantinople who was responsible for administering his punishment, to use the rem-

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[176] Leo, *Serm.* 16.4, 12 December 443, *Sublimitas quidem, dilectissimi.* As Leo said of their trial, "All the persons through whom that unspeakable crime had been perpetrated were present [i.e., at the trial], namely, the young girl no more than ten, and the two women who had raised her and prepared her for this evil deed. Also present was the young man who had violated the girl and their bishop who directed the despicable offense."

[177] Eutyches will be treated in more detail in Chapters 5 and 6, below.

[178] Leo, *Ep.* 38, 23 July 449, *Profectis iam nostris,* Jaffé 432.

edy of patience in curing the madness of ignorance ('imperitorum insania'). He was to be fatherly in his demeanor, "that those whose flesh is old but whose minds are infantile may learn to obey their elders."[179] This was not the spirit of mercy by which Christians were to embrace the Scriptural maxim, "Forgive us our debts as we forgive those in debt to us."[180] It was paternalistic and condescending because it did not acknowledge that Eutyches and his accusers shared, in any sense, the frailties of their genetic inheritance, by which all human beings needed to be forgiven in their very nature as descendants of Adam. Such a presumption of 'sameness' was, however, the foundation for a view of mercy that required especially those in power to be gracious and compassionate in dealing with human weakness and imperfection. Without this presumption, 'mercifulness' ('misericordia') and 'episcopal benevolence' ('episcopalis benivolentia') were available to Eutyches (as to the Manichaeans) only in a circumscribed form, and then only after he renounced his theological views.

The Roman civil laws shaped the conciliar aspects of Eutyches' condemnation, in which Leo urged the emperor Theodosius II to make the secular principles of equity apply equally to ecclesiastical cases. He was to adopt the findings of the synod that had been recently held in Rome and to condemn the Council of Ephesus II, the infamous Robber Synod which had deposed the orthodox Flavian and confirmed the controversial views of Eutyches. Justice would be achieved, according to Leo, only if the equity ('aequitas') that was the province of the secular laws prevailed and if complete restitution were made by restoring every ecclesiastical law and every person to his status prior to the council, until a greater, ecumenical council might be convened.[181] This was the model of equity that provided a type of legal relief that was analogous to what is known in contemporary American civil law as an injunction: to prevent further 'injury ('vis')' to the 'Gospel of Christ', he sought complete restitution pending the outcome of a new and universally-binding trial. The model was rooted in Roman civil procedure, which mandated that a person be restored to his prior state during an appeal from a bad judgment. (Nearly two years later, Leo's request had been more or less granted.) Both his circumscribed view of

[179] Leo, *Ep.* 38, 23 July 449, Jaffé 432. 'hi, qui in senectute carnis suae mente sunt parvuli, discant obedire majoribus.'

[180] Leo, *Serm.* 43.4, 25 February 445.

[181] Leo, *Ep.* 44.2, 13 October 449, *Litteris clementiae vestrae*, Jaffé 438.

mercy and his borrowing from the equitable principles of Roman civil procedure enabled Leo to impose upon Eutyches, as he had upon the Manichaeans, a rough sort of justice that was, nonetheless, consistent with the legal system that he brought to bear upon the apostolic see.

When he wrote to the empress Pulcheria on 20 July 451 he was interested in reviving the principle of moderation, which he thought was especially appropriate for dealing with disputes arising from discordant views ('discordes sensus').[182] Although the conditions at the Robber Synod had been deplorable ("they were in fact more cruel to those whose innocence they took away through persuasion, than to those whom they made into blessed confessors by persecuting them)",[183] Leo decided that all those who retracted their views, including Eutyches and Dioscorus, "the authors of these most violent storms ('auctores saevissimorum turbinum')," were to retain their rank as bishops and the authority over their sees.[184] In principle, this was an example of the mercy that he had preached so often to his congregations.[185] But in practice, Leo may have felt that judging such men harshly would only be divisive, depriving numerous congregations of their leaders, for so many in the East had been forced to subscribe to that council's decrees. Or, perhaps, he simply did not have the capacity to remove them. What makes that possibility seem unlikely is that the imperial family, under the influence of Pulcheria and her new husband, the emperor Marcian, was a resolute supporter of the two-nature christology that was Rome's way of understanding Christ. They would have been willing and able, therefore, to remove from their respective sees any bishops and clergy who dissented. Although Eutyches was deposed for never having acquiesced to the two-nature view, and Dioscorus was deposed and condemned for contumacy, by February 452 many others, especially those who claimed to have been coerced into subscribing to the Council of Ephesus II, had been granted mercy and returned to communion.[186]

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[182] Leo, *Ep.* 95.2, 20 July 451, *Religiosam clementiae vestrae*, Jaffé 475.

[183] Leo, *Ep.* 95.2, 20 July 451, Jaffé 475. 'saeviores profecto in eos quos persuadendo ab innocentia separabant, quam in illos quos beatos confessores persequendo faciebant.'

[184] Ibid. 95.4.

[185] Ibid. 95.2. "The works of the devil are destroyed more effectively when people's hearts are recalled to the love of God and their neighbor."

[186] Ibid. 95.3. Leo granted forgiveness and the apostolic peace to those who, having been coerced by the presiding official to assent to the Robber Synod, had since rescinded their decision and condemned what they had written.

Leo also assumed responsibility for ensuring that members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy were themselves merciful and lenient to the subordinates committed to their care. We have already seen how he had accused Anastasius, the papal representative in charge of the province of eastern Illyricum, of exceeding the limits of his vicariate for having treated Atticus, the bishop of old Epirus, harshly and violently.[187] Anastasius had made him, an old man suffering from ill health, travel to Thessaloniki in the dead of winter to answer the charge that he had failed to attend a synodal meeting. Leo was furious that Anastasius, his vicar in every sense of the word, had not, in dealing with Atticus, imitated the gentleness ('mansuetudo') and kindness that was the ideal of the papacy he was charged with representing. While Anastasius was, strictly speaking, carrying out a papal order when he urged bishops such as Atticus to attend synodal meetings, Leo thought that Anastasius had punished Atticus, who did not comply with the letter of the law, much too severely and mercilessly. Punishment was to be tempered by a spirit of leniency, so that those in need of correction might be steered gently down a better path.[188] It was his selfishness and love of power that had prevented Anastasius from administering his office judiciously and temperately, and from considering the interests of Atticus in determining the medicine that was appropriate to treat the particular misdeed he had committed.[189] In dealing with Atticus cruelly, Anastasius had misrepresented the interests of Rome by failing to make Leo 'present' through the extension of compassion and mercy into his vicariate.

Leo similarly urged a member of the ecclesiastical hierarchy to be merciful in the case of Rusticus, the bishop of the Narbonensis province in Southern Gaul who was so distraught by the local opposition mounting against him that he wrote to Leo, asking for advice. We have already seen how harshly two of his subordinates had criticized him

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[187] Leo, *Ep.* 14.1, c. 6 January 446, Jaffé 411.

[188] Ibid. 'erga corrigendos agat benevolentia quam severitas, plus cohortatio quam commotio, plus caritas quam potestas.' "Kindness toward those who are to be corrected works better than severity, exhortation than anger, charity than power."

[189] Leo, *Ep.* 14.1, c. 6 January 446, Jaffé 411. 'Sed ab his qui quae sua sunt quaerunt, non quae Jesu Christi, facile ab hac lege disceditur, et dum dominari magis quam consulere subditis placet, honor inflat superbiam, et quod provisum est ad concordiam, tendit ad noxam.' "But those who seek their own and not the things of Jesus Christ easily depart from this law [i.e., of kindness], and while they would rather dominate than take care of [their] subordinates, the distinction [of their position] inflates [their] pride, and what was provided for the sake of harmony instead leads to harm."

for what they perceived to be undue leniency in his treatment of adulterers. Disgusted, Rusticus threatened to quit. Instead, Leo urged him to be just as lenient in dealing with his critics as he had been toward the adulterers. "You should act gently towards those whose zeal for chastity seems to have exceeded the limits of vengeance, lest the devil who deceived the adulterers should rejoice over the avengers of adultery."[190] The responsibility of a bishop toward his clergy, which included dispensing the correct 'spiritual medicine' even to those who might seem to reject it, was to take precedence over any personal feelings of being overburdened by the job. Performing the duties of office and refusing to quit were the concrete manifestations of extending the kindness of mercy.

Leo was sometimes better at urging others to practice mercy than he was at dispensing it himself. When a man named Petronianus had been found wandering through the provinces of Gaul claiming to be his deacon, Leo was not amused. He told Ravennius, the bishop of Arles (26 August 449), to check this man's "unspeakable audacity" ('audacia nefanda') and warn the bishops of the region.[191] Without either questioning Petronianus or holding an ecclesiastical trial, Ravennius was to remove him from communion. Because submitting to the authority of Rome, not fraudulently claiming it, was part and parcel of receiving its merciful treatment, Leo did not hesitate to punish this man with permanent excommunication. When heresy was involved, so long as it had nothing to do with the Manichaeans or the Priscillians, Leo sometimes tried to be forgiving. Recanting heterodox beliefs was generally considered to be a suitable atonement, as it might have been for Eutyches, and as it was in the case of the Pelagians: those who had previously subscribed to Pelagianism, but who had since professed the catholic faith, were to be granted the 'great indulgence' ('magnum beneficium') of being permitted to remain in their present rank, but without any chance of promotion.[192] This not only punished the former Pelagians, but deterred others from subscribing to their views. Keeping former Pelagians in full sight, while stopping their promotion, was also a clever way to prevent those whose views were troublesome, but not entirely

[190] Leo, *Ep.* 167.0, 458/9 (?), Jaffé 544. 'mitius agas cum eis qui pudicitiae zelo videntur modum excessisse vindictae; ne diabolus, qui decepit adulteros, de adulterii exsultet ultoribus.'

[191] Leo, *Ep.* 42, 26 August 449, *Circumspectum te*, Jaffé 436.

[192] Leo, *Ep.* 18, 30 December 447, *Lectis fraternitatis tuae*, Jaffé 416.

reprehensible, from becoming a powerful, well-entrenched sect in the region. Even that 'great indulgence' would not have been granted if such persons had submitted to a second baptism by the Pelagians. As a part of the ordering of the universe and, therefore, of the church that was the foundation of justice, mercy was available only when such bonds to the church as baptism, the rite that defined one's status as a Christian, had not been ruptured.

Human compassion and mercy, in all its imperfection, were the fluid means by which the ideals of justice, as they existed in the divine rationality, were implemented. The view that the order of the universe was sometimes imperceptibly, yet nonetheless inevitably, just persisted in comforting Leo's congregations, who viewed their world as changing in ways that they could not have fully comprehended.[193] This ideal was tempered, however, by his practical view of justice, which he brought to bear upon the developing ecclesiastical law and upon his interpretation of its disciplinary measures. His nuanced synthesis of idealism and practicality suggests why the regions of northern Italy, as well as the provinces of Gaul, North Africa, and Spain, either passively accepted, or actively sought, legal guidance from Rome amid the political and personal uncertainty of life in the late Roman West.

[193] See, for example, Ward-Perkins, *The Fall of Rome*, esp. "The Disappearance of Comfort," pp. 87–120.

CHAPTER THREE

SUFFERING, COMPASSION, AND THE CARE OF THE POOR

The human compassion and mercy that were the ideals of social justice influenced not only the formation of ecclesiastical law and the application of discipline, but also the way in which the church interacted with the world. That the poor should be cared for was the practical result of an ideological change in the notion of justice, discussed in the previous chapter, from a Stoic model that viewed human associations as the calculated, rational means to certain social ends, to a Christian altruism, in which human beings, by their very nature, were responsible for each other.

Long before Christianity became the state religion, Graeco-Roman society had devised various means by which to ameliorate human suffering. Food shortages were regularly addressed by private benefactors, who sometimes served as government officials charged with administering the grain supply.[1] A system of patronage also operated throughout the Graeco-Roman world, as Garnsey has remarked, in order to provide clients with "basic subsistence and physical protection."[2] To fulfill the expectations of congregations whose views were shaped by that world such bishops as Cyprian of Carthage, Ambrose of Milan, and especially Caesarius of Arles (d. 542) subsumed this long-standing system of patronage within the Christian ideology of charity, thereby "translat[ing Caesarius'] numerous acts of charity into political achievement," as Klingshirn has observed.[3] While this subtle shift in the ideological framework of social relationships was less developed in the thought of Leo, his contribution was to refine the theology of charity. He brought into sharper focus what constituted poverty, who the

[1] P. Garnsey, *Famine and Food Supply in the Graeco-Roman World* (Cambridge, 1988), p. 15.

[2] P. Garnsey, G. Woolf, "Patronage of the Rural Poor in the Roman World," in ed. A. Wallace-Hadrill, *Patronage in Ancient Society* (London, 1989), p. 166.

[3] Ibid., discussing W. Klingshirn, "Charity and power: Caesarius of Arles and the ransoming of captives in Sub-Roman Gaul," *JRS* 75 (1985), pp. 183–203, esp. pp. 187, 194, 203.

objects of poor relief were, and how those with means were to relate to those without.[4]

Although Leo was responsible for ministering to the poor of the city even before he became the bishop of Rome, i.e., when he served as archdeacon under Caelestine (pope, 422–432), his letters and sermons tell us almost nothing about the mechanics of that system. What those duties may have entailed can, nevertheless, be surmised from Ps. Clement of Rome, who said that deacons were to serve as "the eyes of the bishop"; they were "to learn who was sick from bodily disease, and to bring them to the attention of the people (if they are unaware) that they may visit them, and supply them with necessities according to the judgment of the bishop."[5] Serving as "the eyes of the bishop" suggests that by the fourth century the deacon was charged with more than caring for the needs of the poor. He was expected to assuage human suffering in a variety of forms. Among the objects of poor relief that Leo, as bishop of Rome in the fifth century, attended to were "the illnesses of the dying, the feebleness of the infirm, the toils of those in exile, the abandonment of children, and the sorrows of widows in their loneliness."[6]

Caring for the poor, sick, and otherwise needy required a steady source of funds, which was provided by the wealth of the church. That wealth consisted in the accumulation of individual donations as well as tax and other legal benefits, such as the right of the church to be named as the beneficiary in a will, that the state bestowed upon the church from the time of Constantine. When Leo became bishop, he was responsible for ensuring that such gifts continued to flow freely to the churches and for overseeing their distribution among those whom the church had registered on its list of the poor ('matricula'). Encouraging almsgiving by his congregations was the way in which he

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[4] On the theology of poverty in the early middle ages, see e.g., C. Lindberg, "Through a Glass Darkly: A History of the Church's Vision of the Poor and Poverty," *Ecumenical Review* 33 (1982), esp. pp. 40–43.

[5] Ps. Clement of Rome, *Ep. 1 ad Jacobum*, 12, PG 1, 468–469. See also ed. P. de Lagarde, *Reliquiae iuris ecclesiastici antiquissimae, Graece et Syriace* (1856, repr. 1967), pp. 80ff., and G. Uhlhorn, *Christian Charity in the Ancient Church* (New York, 1883), pp. 164–165, which I found useful for identifying sources. On the nature of pastoral care in late antiquity more generally, see P. Allen, W. Mayer, "Through a Bishop's Eyes: Towards a definition of pastoral care in late antiquity," *Augustinianum* 40 (2000), pp. 345–397.

[6] Leo, *Serm.* 40.4, 1 March 442 (Recension A), *Licet nobis, dilectissimi.* 'aegritudines decumbentium, inbecillitates debilium, labores (labor: B) exulum, destitutio pupillorum, et desolatarum lamenta (maestitudo: B) viduarum.'

accomplished the former task, as many of his sermons attest, while the sources are mostly silent regarding how many he counted among the poor, and how precisely he distributed the funds to them.

In Antioch, John Chrysostom estimated that 10% of the city were wealthy, 10% were poor, "having nothing at all", and the remaining 80% were among the middle class. His purpose in providing such figures was to prove to his listeners that there were adequate numbers of the wealthy to support the material needs of the destitute.[7] The inhumanity of the wealthy who refused to give was offered as a telling contrast to the generosity and altriusm of the church. Although its revenue was one of the lowest among the wealthy, it supported not only the registered poor, which included the widows and virgins, but also those lying sick in the hospital, the healthy, travellers, the maimed, ministers at the altar, and those who made daily requests of the church.[8] The needs of all such persons could be adequately addressed, said Chrysostom, if only ten men donated individually as much money as the local church.[9] The implication was that the registered poor, together with those in physical distress, outnumbered the charitable funds that the church distributed by a ratio of ten to one. In a homily on the *Acts of the Apostles* he estimated the number of Christians residing in Constantinople at about 100,000, and the number of poor, which presumably included Jews and Greeks, at 50,000.[10] He was simply exaggerating in order to show that "poverty would be banished, if everything was shared in common as it was at the time of Acts."[11] Another source for imagining the scale of the problem is the 'matricula' ('catalogos'), the list of persons registered to receive support from the

[7] John Chrysostom, *In Matthaeum homiliae*, 66.3, PG 58, 630. On the opposition between the rich donor or employer and the poor laborer in early Byzantine literature and society, see E. Patlagean, *Pauvreté économique et pauvreté sociale à Byzance, 4e–7e siècles* (Paris, 1977), pp. 25–35, esp. 25–26. See W. Mayer, "Poverty and Society in the World of John Chrysostom," in eds. W. Bowden, A. Gutteridge, C. Machado, *Social and Political Life in Late Antiquity* (Late Antique Archaeology 3) (Leiden, 2006), p. 468.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Ibid. He was exaggerating for rhetorical purposes. Mayer, "Poverty and Society in the World of John Chrysostom," p. 468.

[10] John Chrysostom, *In Acta apostolorum homiliae*, 11.3, PG 60, 97.

[11] Mayer, "Poverty and Society in the World of John Chrysostom," p. 468. S.J. Friesen, "Poverty in Pauline Studies: Beyond the So-called New Consensus," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 26 (2004), p. 341, deconstructs the rich/poor dichtomy by proposing a poverty scale for the Roman empire. I am grateful to Wendy Mayer for drawing my attention to this study.

church, which in the Antioch of Chrysostom's day included 3,000 widows and virgins.[12]

These are the few surviving numbers from the fourth century that the sources provide, and from them we can estimate that the poor in Rome during the time of Leo—the widows, the sick, the lepers, the hungry, and those otherwise in need—counted in the thousands. Merely attempting to provide relief for such numbers would have required a well-organized system of collecting, maintaining, and administering funds, the details of which remain largely unknown. Although Leo's letters and sermons shed little light on the matter, from them we learn that everyone who sought aid ideally received it, that alms were collected willingly from the members of his congregations, and that the funds were dispensed to the needy at the discretion of church administrators.[13]

What his writings do provide is a lens through which to view the late Roman theology of charity, in which he imagined and construed the appropriate ways to give and receive material relief to those whom the church counted among the poor. This is not to suggest that such views were in any significant way removed from the realities of humanitarian relief. A theology of charity and of the poor was rather the driving and imaginitive force behind the charitable institutions, the hospitals, the churches as refuges for the needy and oppressed, that were one of the distinctive features of the late Roman world. 'Driving' because without this theological development such institutions might never have existed, and 'imaginative' because it represented a deliberate change from what had existed before.

This shift in the social imagination from a Graeco-Roman paganism, in which the poor were largely invisible,[14] to a Christian society, in which the preaching of prominent Christians made the poor become vivid and real, partly accounts for the transition in the late Roman world from the ancient civic model, in which the circumscribed sense of community defined the limits of giving, to the new Medieval model, in which, as Brown has observed, "society was viewed as a single, all-embracing whole that included city and countryside alike."[15] Viewing

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[12] John Chrysostom, *In Matthaeum homiliae*, 66.3, PG 58, 630.

[13] Leo, *Serm.* 11.2, November 445, *Et divinis praeceptis, dilectissimi.*

[14] Garnsey, Woolf, "Patronage of the Rural Poor in the Roman World," p. 153; see also P. Garnsey, *Food and Society in Classical Antiquity* (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 114–115, on the bias of the sources toward the eating habits of the wealthy.

[15] Brown, *Poverty and Leadership in the Later Roman Empire* (Hanover, London, 2002),

society as a totality of potentially needy human beings made it possible to construe and eventually to implement a wide-scale system of poor relief that was not limited by the boundaries of social networks. One of the most compelling consequences of this shift in the social imagination, which was supported by the parallel shift in the intellectual sphere from a Stoic to a Christian worldview, was the development of a theology of charity that the humanitarian institutions embodied.

1. *The theology of poverty, charity, and altruism*

Charity, the giving of alms to the poor, was celebrated as the "root of all our good things"[16] and as the "sum of all virtues,"[17] which, according to John Chrysostom, enabled human beings to enter heaven: "Charity is the queen of the virtues, the best intercessor, who quickly lifts people up into the heights of heaven … Vast are the wings of charity; she cuts through the air, surpasses the moon, exceeds the rays of the sun, and reaches the very heights of heaven. But there she does not remain, but surpasses the heaven too, and exceeds the hosts of angels, the choir of archangels, and all the higher powers, and stands before the very royal throne."[18] For Leo, its excellence resided in the fact that charity and faith were mutually dependent concepts. Each realized its potential only in relation to the other in the sense that faith was the basis of charitable works, and charitable works imbued faith with the fortitude that made it come alive.[19] It was also the virtue that made all the other virtues effective,[20] because performing good works alone did not

pp. 6, 8, 74. On 'the poor' as a social and even theological category invented by the late Roman bishop see also ibid., p. 8; and see the book review on the same by W. Brueggemann, "Inventing the poor: how the early church practiced charity," *Christian Century* 120, 12 (2003), pp. 30–31. On wealth and status as social categories, see e.g., Garnsey, *Food and Society in Classical Antiquity*, p. 114.

[16] John Chrysostom, *In Matthaeum homiliae*, 46.4, PG 58, 481–482; see also ibid. 481, where charity ('agape'), moderation, and almsgiving exceed even virginity.

[17] Leo, *Serm.* 48.4, 13 March 455, *Inter omnes, dilectissimi.* 'hanc maxime gratiam conentur adquirere, qua et omnium continetur summa virtutum et multitudo tegitur peccatorum.' Christians were "to try to acquire this grace especially, in which the sum of all virtues is contained and by which a 'multitude of sins is covered.'" Cf. Leo, *Serm.* 10.3, November 444, *Apostolicae traditionis, dilectissimi.*

[18] John Chrysostom, *De poenitentia*, *hom.* 3, PG 49, 293.

[19] Leo, *Serm.* 10.3, November 444.

[20] Ibid.

endow the individual with the merit that was needed to atone for sins committed after baptism.

Since the earliest Christian times it was widely believed that the water of baptism contained the power to wash away only those sins committed before the rite had been performed. To atone for sins committed afterwards, an individual by the middle of the third century was expected to make charitable contributions to the church, in other words, to give alms for distribution to the poor. The idea that alms had the intrinsic capacity to remedy sin was expressed by Cyprian of Carthage, whose view of penance carved a middle ground between the moral and disciplinary laxness of his clergy and the rigorism of the Novatians at Rome.[21] Until that time, offering penitent prayers was the means by which the mainstream church addressed the problem of post-baptismal sins. Cyprian's innovation was to gather texts from Scripture and the apocrypha to show that prayer together with alms made petitions more effective and delivered souls from death.[22] "As water extinguishes fire, so almsgiving quenches sin," said Cyprian, quoting Sir. 3.30: "Here also it is shown and proved that as in the washing ('lavacrum') of saving water the fire of Gehenna is extinguished, so by almsgiving and works of righteousness the flame of sins is subdued. And because in baptism remission of sins is granted once and for all, constant and perpetual labour, imitating the image ('instar') of baptism, once again bestows the mercy ('indulgentia') of God."[23] Investing alms with the broad power to atone for sins committed after baptism was congenial to Leo's view of human beings as weak and sinning creatures in need of divine largess.[24] The sins that it washed away were for Leo and Cyprian, as they were for Maximus, the bishop of Turin in north-

[21] Quasten, 2, 380. See L. Wohleb, "Cyprian de opere et eleemosynis," *ZNW* (1926) 270–278. The Novatians were a schismatic sect named after the Roman priest Novatianus (d. 257/8) that had refused to readmit lapsed Christians into the fold after the persecutions of the emperor Decius in 250–251.

[22] Cyprian, *De opere et eleemosynis*, 5, PL 6, 606.

[23] Ibid. 2, PL 6, 603.

[24] Leo, *Serm.* 7.1, November 441, *Notum vobis, dilectissimi.* "Knowing that, apart from the baptism of regeneration in which the stains of all sin ('peccatum') are washed away, this remedy has been granted by God to human weakness: if a sin is committed on this earthly abode, it is blotted out by almsgiving. Almsgiving is a work of charity ('caritas'), and we know that charity covers a multitude of sins." 'scientes praeter illud regenerationis lavacrum, in quo universorum ablutae sunt maculae peccatorum, hoc remedium infirmitati humanae divinitus esse donatum, ut si quid culparum in hac terrena habitatione contrahitur, elemosinis deleatur. Elemosinae enim opera caritatis sunt, et scimus quia caritas operit multitudinem peccatorum.'

ern Italy (d. c. 408/23), unlimited. Elaborating upon the same watery metaphor that Cyprian had used, Maximus imagined almsgiving as "a fountain of salvation" that doused the flames that had been kindled by sinning.[25] In contrast to the water of baptism, the metaphorical water of almsgiving was imbued with a continuous power of forgiveness. That all three men ascribed to almsgiving the same sin-atoning powers as baptism makes it that much more striking that this way of understanding alms was not the only option. Even for a theologian as deeply committed as Augustine was to expounding charity as the expression of all virtues and as the benchmark of Christian perfection, almsgiving did not necessarily atone for every type of sin. No matter how generous or sincere, it did not have the power to forgive such sins as unchastity ('impudicitia'), idolatry ('idololatria'), and murder ('homicidium'),[26] which required a more severe penance ('humiliore') accompanied by excommunication. Almsgiving was, nonetheless, the means by which people displayed the mercy and love that was the self-understanding of the church. Leo articulated a more liberal theory of almsgiving because he was thoroughly devoted to the idea that human beings were frail and vulnerable creatures who needed the compassion of a merciful God and an altruistic system of forgiveness for dealing with post-baptismal sins. The idea was consistent with a theology of justice that, I suggest, made human imperfection central to its overarching scheme.

Almsgiving thus served two purposes in the late Roman church. It benefited the giver by atoning for his sins, and it addressed the material needs, in theory at least, of a certain percentage of Christians counted among the poor. To elicit donations from his congregations, Leo appealed to their selfish interests, the basest motive for giving that might impress upon them the necessity of being generous. Making charitable contributions was viewed, in this context, as an opportunity for exercising virtue ('exercendarum oportunitas virtutum')[27] and as the

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[25] Maximus of Turin, *Serm.* 22.1, CCSL 23.

[26] See Augustine, *De fide et operibus* 19 (34), PL 40, 220; B. Ramsey, "Almsgiving in the Latin Church: The Late Fourth and Early Fifth Centuries," *JTS* 43 (1982), p. 243. See *De fide et operibus* 26 (48), PL 40, 227, where Augustine identified three grades of sin that required three types of penance. See also *Serm.* 9.18, PL 38, 88–89 and *De civ. dei*, 21.27.4, PL 41, 749, where Augustine acknowledged that only small sins could be wiped clean by daily almsgiving.

[27] Leo, *Serm.* 40.5, 1 March 442 (Recension A).

means by which every Christian might benefit her soul,[28] even when the receiver of alms did not appreciate the gesture.[29] The language of business transactions was sometimes used to motivate the selfish interests of the giver: food for someone in need was equal to the cost of purchasing one's entrance into the kingdom of heaven.[30] Those who persisted in their refusal to give were further reassured that the benefits accruing to them would far exceed their material expenditure, so that "Whatever is spent on food for the poor, on the healing of the weak, on the ransom of captives, and on any other work of mercy, is not lost, but increased."[31] The idea that almsgiving was a good investment that benefited the giver and his family forever had already been explored by Augustine: "Since you are holding onto [your wealth] here and don't want to send it on to your [dead] son, to whom do you entrust it? Do you entrust to brokers the share of the one who has passed on ahead, and you won't entrust it to Christ to whom he has passed on ahead? Or does your solicitor ('procurator') suit you, and Christ not suit you?"[32] If the possibility of earning interest in heaven did not impress upon potential donors the importance of giving, then Leo insisted not only that doing good might benefit the soul, but that failing to do so might harm it.[33] He was not above inciting fear in his listeners in order to persuade them to give.

When exercised correctly, charitable donation benefited the giver in a more subtle sense as well. It implied that no human being, no matter his plight, was to be considered worthless ('vilis') by another.[34] People were not to turn a deaf ear ('surdus auditus') to the suffering of the needy, not only "that [they] might deserve to find mercy at the judgment,"[35] but that they might understand themselves. Compassion for

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[28] Leo, *Serm.* 6.1, November 440, *Multis divinarum Scripturarum testimoniis edocemur.*

[29] Leo, *Serm.* 20.3, c. 445 (?), *Dispensationes misericordiae Dei.* "Although the malice of some people does not subside with any kindness, nonetheless works of mercy are not without fruit, nor is benevolence that is offered to the ungrateful ever lost." 'Quamvis enim quorundam malignitas nulla humanitate mitescat, non sunt tamen infructuosa opera pietatis, nec umquam perdit benivolentia quod praestat ingrato.'

[30] Leo, *Serm.* 9.2, November 443, *Misericordia, dilectissimi, et iustitia Dei.*

[31] Leo, *Serm.* 78.4, 443, *Ad exorandam, dilectissimi.*

[32] Augustine, *Serm.* 9.20, PL 38, 90.

[33] Leo, *Serm.* 11.1, November 445, *Et divinis praeceptis, dilectissimi.* 'sibi malus est qui alteri bonus non est, et animae nocet suae qui ut potest non succurrerit alienae.' "He who is not good to another does evil to himself, and he who does not come to the aid of another, as best he can, harms his own soul."

[34] Leo, *Serm.* 9.2, November 443.

[35] Leo, *Serm.* 39.6, 9 February 441, *Hebraeorum quondam populus.*

human suffering was predicated on the notion that every Christian had been made from the same nature, cut from the same cloth,[36] including rich and poor alike.[37] Jerome had put the same idea in terms so vivid as to suggest that he himself had been struggling with the problem: "Should I now describe the various calamities of human beings, the mutilitated noses, missing eyes, feet half burnt, sallow hands, distended bellies, emaciated thighs, swollen calves, putrid flesh eaten away and teaming with maggots?" Compassion was the full expression of self-understanding and of sensitivity towards the fragility of the human condition: "That man whom we despise, whom we cannot so much as look at, and the mere thought of whom makes us vomit, is human like ourselves, is made of the same clay as we are, is formed from the same elements. Whatever he suffers we too may suffer. Let us regard his wounds as our own, and all of our hardness of heart toward others will give way to our merciful ('clemens') thought for ourselves."[38] Recalling human weakness in the distress of others, assuaging their poverty, undertaking the care of the sick, and otherwise attending to the needs of those in distress, were the means by which the virtue of compassion was thought to be cultivated among Christians,[39] who were to recognize that their mortal nature ('mortalitas') made them subject to change and perishable ('caduca').[40] Because physical well-being was thereby construed as a temporary state, everyone was expected to fear what she, as a frail creature, was capable of suffering.[41] By virtue of this shared condition—the possibility that suffering might fall upon each and every human being because of his mortal nature—people were to display sympathy and compassion toward each other. To withhold that compassion was not only a failure of generosity, but a misunderstanding of the human condition that bordered on self-deception.[42]

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[36] Leo, Cf. *Serm.* 9.2, November 443.

[37] Leo, *Serm.* 11.1, November 445.

[38] Jerome, *Ep.* 77.6, PL 22, 694; Ramsey, 'Almsgiving …', p. 250. Leo deplored those who had so little regard for their own frail nature that they withheld mercy from others, even if only to obtain it selfishly for themselves. Cf. Leo, *Serm.* 11.1, November 445.

[39] Leo, *Serm.* 10.1, November 444.

[40] Leo, *Serm.* 11.1, November 445.

[41] Cf. Ibid.

[42] Ibid. "'Let them weep with those who weep,' and let them sigh with the sighs of those who mourn; let them share their wealth with the needy; through the ministry of a thoroughly healthy body let them bend down to those laid low by illness; let them set aside a portion of their food for the hungry; and let them feel cold in the pallid nakedness of those who shiver."

The danger of such a view was that it made Christian charity into a calculated act of narcissism. Because Augustine was aware of the problem, he chastised those whose desire to be merciful made them long for the miserable conditions under which they might exercise, and ultimately benefit from, the mechanics of charity. Jerome was also aware of the problem, which he attempted to alleviate by acknowledging that the intention of the giver was relevant to evaluating the moral quality of the charitable act. Those whom he denigrated as pagans were moved to compassion only when they feared that the severed limb or the cancerous and rotting foot of some 'miserable wretch' might someday afflict them. Christian charity, in contrast, was to be motivated by a deeper, less self-interested, feeling of compassion for the suffering of another human being, and not simply by the fear of succumbing to a similarly miserable fate.[43] It was acceptable to offer alms to the needy while contemplating the fragility of the human condition, but not while anticipating a return on that investment during one's lifetime.

While Jerome was concerned with the quality of the emotional response to suffering and with differentiating the selfish emotions from the altruistic, Augustine, at least in his early years, was committed to the Stoic and Neoplatonic view that saw it as objectionable for compassionate actions to be moved by feelings of pity.

> Does anyone doubt that the word 'compassion' ('misericordia') implies that the heart feels pain because it suffers for the misery of another? Who does not concede that the wise man should be free from all painful emotion ('miseria') when he assists the needy? … Although he acts with a tranquil mind, not from the stimulus of painful feeling, but from motives of benevolence, it must nonetheless be called 'compassionate' ('misericors'). There is nothing wrong with the word 'compassionate' when there is no passion ('miseria') found. Fools who avoid compassion as a vice, because they cannot be sufficiently moved by a sense of duty ('officium') without feeling stirred by distressful emotion ('perturbatio'), are frozen into a hardened inhumanity, rather than calmed by a rational tranquillity.[44]

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[43] Jerome, *Tractatus de psalmo 133 [134]*, CCSL 78, p. 288; Ramsey, 'Almsgiving …' p. 250.

[44] Augustine, *De moribus ecclesiae catholicae*, 27 (53–54), PL 332, 1333. 'nam quis ignoret ex eo appellatam esse misericordiam, quod miserum cor faciat condolescentis alieno malo? Et quis non concedat ab omni miseria liberum esse debere sapientem, cum subvenit inopi …? Etiamsi id faciat mente tranquilla, nullis aculeis doloris instinctus, sed adductus officio bonitatis, misericors tamen vocandus est. Huic enim nihil obest nomen, cum absit miseria. Stulti vero cum misericordiam quasi vitium divitant, quia

The compassionate person was to identify altruistically, rather than emotionally, with the experience of human suffering. Later, in *De civitate Dei*, Augustine modified this view to permit a moderate degree of emotion.[45] Leo, though less concerned than Jerome had been with evaluating the nuanced state of the donor's mind, was unambivalently committed to the idea that feeling empathy and compassion was the appropriate response to the experience of human misery. There was no sense that freedom from human emotion was desirable even as an ideal to strive for. What Leo feared was not that Christians might become emotional, but that by failing to give they might become "strangers to humanity" ('humanitatis extranei'). Since "only the hardest heart would not be moved by any misery at all among those faltering," the genuine feeling of human compassion, no matter its impetus, was an adequate motive for making charitable donations.[46] All gifts were welcome, including those motivated by a selfish desire to give.

Because both the donors and recipients shared in the human nature of Christ, it was theologically acceptable for the suffering of others to arouse intense feelings of pity and compassion. True to its form, Christ's human nature had experienced real, human emotions when it had hungered, thirsted, and wept as a human being. That is why the poor, in all their misery, were to be identified fully with Christ: "You should perceive Christ in the needy to the extent that your resources allow," urged Leo, "Christ our Lord has recommended the poor to us so greatly that he testifies that he is the one who is clothed, supported, and fed in them."[47] Because the poor were construed as imitators of the human frailty of Christ, they became a recognizable class, a group of people defined not only by their material conditions, but by an ideological concept that potential donors could readily identify. Made visible through the same human suffering that Christ had experienced, 'the poor' were a constant reminder to the wealthy of

officio satis moveri nequeunt, si nec perturbatione commoventur, congelascunt potius rigore inhumanitatis quam rationis tranquillitate serenantur.'

[45] Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, 14.9–10; R. Sorabji, *Emotion and Peace of Mind* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 397–398.

[46] Leo, *Serm.* 11.1, c. 445 (?).,

[47] Leo, *Serm.* 6, November 440. 'pro possibilitate virium vestrarum intellegatis in egentibus Christum, qui tantum nobis pauperes commendavit, ut se in ipsis vestiri, suscipi testetur et pasci Christus Dominus noster.' See also *Serm.* 91.3, 453, *Devotionem fidelium, dilectissimi.* The most praiseworthy distributors of clothing and food among the destitute ('inopes') realized that they were clothing and feeding Christ in the needy.

their obligation to give. That late Roman bishops recommended the poor to their congregations in such vivid and theologically-compelling terms suggests that the average Christian had to be cajoled into parting with her wealth. Refusing to attend to the needs of the poor, said Leo, was to "deny food to the one who said that what is given to the poor is expended on him," namely, Christ.[48] The same idea had appeared in Matthew 25:34–40[49] and was later amplified by such Latin theologians as Ambrose, Augustine, Peter Chrysologus (the bishop of Ravenna, d. 450), and others.[50] "Minister to a poor person and you have served Christ," said Ambrose; Augustine agreed that "By doing this [almsgiving] we recognize Christ in good works, not in a bodily manner but in the heart;" and Peter Chrysologus remarked, "A beggar's hand is Christ's poor box ('gazophylacium'), for whatever a poor person accepts, Christ accepts."[51] Although such excerpts do nothing to illuminate who 'the poor' were and in what the material conditions of their suffering consisted, together they suggest that the poor were so readily identified by late Roman Christians that the challenge for the church was not in distinguishing them from the rest of the congregation, but in making them appear more like everyone else and, therefore, as worthy objects of compassion.

Sometimes the interests of charity were better served by making the poor seem different.[52] By describing in vivid detail the physical condition of the needy, those whose extreme suffering distinguished them from the rest of the congregation, the late Roman bishop served as an advocate for the poor. John Chrysostom described the maimed and disfigured, the unsightly and repulsive whose flesh was covered with

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[48] Leo, *Serm.* 18.3, 16 December 451, *Praesidia, dilectissimi.*

[49] "Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me…' 'Truly as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.'"

[50] Ramsey, "Almsgiving …", p. 228.

[51] Augustine, *Serm.* 239.7, PL 38, 1130; Peter Chrysologus, *Serm.* 8, PL 52, 210B; Ramsey, "Almsgiving …", pp. 227–228. On identifying Christ with the poor as a response to the changing political conditions of the fifth-century West, see R.P.C. Hanson, "The Reaction of the Church to the Collapse of the Western Roman Empire in the Fifth Century," *VC* 26 (1972), pp. 272–287, see esp. 285.

[52] On the redescription of the poor more broadly, see R. Finn, *Almsgiving in the Later Roman Empire. Christian Promotion and Practice* (313–450) (Oxford, 2006), pp. 182–188.

sores, as a way of inspiring generous gifts among his congregations.[53] The challenge in conjuring such disturbing images was to reveal those in need without portraying them as being so different from everyone else that potential donors felt no empathy. Some of the poor whom Augustine told of, in contrast, made their presence known simply when they approached him, as a kind of ambassador to the churches, while begging for donations.[54] Together these were the poor whose grotesque physical condition, or whose forthright requests for money, made them readily known to the bishops. Others were much more reluctant to display their neediness openly. Lamenting that some impoverished Christians were too ashamed to ask for alms, Leo urged his congregations to "relieve [such persons] of their hidden need ('ab occulta necessitate')."[55] That exhortation unwittingly reveals that those considered to be among the poor were readily identified, even when they failed to come forward on their own initiative. It also suggests that he counted among the poor not only the worst cases on the streets, but those who had been so well-integrated into his churches that they might pass as members of the middle-class. Training in compassion, which potential donors cultivated by construing Christ correctly, gave them the ability to identify the poor in their midst. Not only were they to recognize their own nature and that of the poor in the human nature of Christ, but they were to contemplate the paradox of the poverty and humility that was his Passion, that "although he was rich … [he] became poor so that he might make us rich by his own poverty."[56] The idea that Christ voluntarily made himself poor was one more reason for people to consider the state of poverty as a kind of wealth in disguise. Unveiling that paradox by cultivating a vigilant compassion enabled Leo's congregations to perceive those who were in need among them.

This may have led some to conclude, incorrectly, that the poor were placed on this earth for no other reason than to make Christ present. His humility and suffering were sometimes construed as the means by which the poor, through whom "we worship [Him] as king and Lord in the majesty of the Father," might be connected to him.

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[53] D. Caner, *Wandering, Begging Monks: Spiritual Authority and the Promotion of Monasticism in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley, 2002), p. 162.

[54] Augustine, *Serm.* 61 (12) 13, PL 38, 414. "The poor implore us, and they say that we should speak to you, that they might receive something from you." 'pauperes interpellant nos, et dicunt ut dicamus vobis, ut aliquid accipiant a vobis.'

[55] Leo, *Serm.* 9.3, November 443.

[56] Ibid., citing 2 Cor. 8.9.

Because of this inherent connection, those who cared for the poor were "to be admitted into fellowship with the kingdom of heaven."[57] As the potential recipients of charity and compassion, the poor became the means by which everyone else might express their devotion to Christ. A delicate balance remained, therefore, between portraying the poor as an abstract class whose state of poverty made them similar to Christ, and for that reason worthy of alms, and acknowledging them as fragile individuals whose physical suffering, in and of itself, demanded a compassionate response.

That people shared in the human nature of Christ meant, for Leo and other Latin theologians, not only that they suffered, but that they were endowed innately with the capacity for goodness. Because Christ's human nature was roughly equivalent to that of ordinary human beings, they were, by virtue of their humanity, capable of performing the acts of mercy that filled them with God's image,[58] the mirror by which they were to examine their soul to determine whether it conformed to the divine.[59] (This was a noteworthy departure from the Eastern tradition, in which the image of God resided in the rationality of the human mind.) As the result of a self-searching contemplation, people were expected to find "the fruits of charity" that "they should not doubt that God is within them."[60] The divine mercy that they had received, namely the love that God bestowed upon them in restoring their capacity for goodness after the Fall, required that they reciprocate by feeding the hungry and caring for the sick: "[Where God] finds the concern of compassion ('cura misericordiae'), there he recognizes the image of his goodness ('pietas')."[61] These ideas were common among all of the Latin theologians, including Augustine, who urged his listeners to "Care for him lying under doorways, care for him hungry, care for him suffering from the cold, care for him needy, care for him a

[57] Leo, *Serm.* 9.3, November 443.

[58] Leo, *Serm.* 20.2, c. 445 (?).

[59] Leo, *Serm.* 49.4, 17 February 457 (?), *In omnibus quidem, dilectissimi.*

[60] Leo, *Serm.* 48.3, 13 March 455. 'si repositum aliquid in conscientiis suis de fructibus caritatis invenerint, Deum sibi inesse non dubitent, et ut magis magisque tanti hospitis sint capaces, fiant perseverantis misericordiae operibus ampliores. Si enim dilectio Deus est, nullum habere debet terminum caritas.' "If they were to find anything lodged in their consciences from the fruits of charity, then they should not doubt that God is within them, and as they become more and more receptive to such a guest, let them become yet more abundant in the works of enduring compassion. If God is love, charity should have no end."

[61] Leo, *Serm.* 48.5, 13 March 455.

stranger."[62] The capacity to love one's neighbor as one's self was viewed as further evidence that people, after the fall of Adam, had been refashioned by God according to His image and likeness. 'Neighbor' was defined by Leo broadly. It included not only friends and relatives, but everyone with whom one shared a common nature, whether enemies or allies, freemen and women or slaves.[63] The extent to which loving one's neighbor in such expansive terms was synonymous with providing relief to the needy remains unclear. We know that organized relief for the poor was distributed only to Christians who were registered with the churches. Although Leo told his congregations that they should attend to the needy in general, they were to be especially mindful of those who were "members of the body of Christ," which meant that outsiders, such as heretics and pagans, were generally excluded.[64] Perhaps it was through *ad hoc* displays of charity, such as that given to random travelers, that these so-called outsiders of the church were attended to. The ideal remained, nonetheless, that loving one's neighbor, however narrowly the concept may have been applied in practice, was the theological foundation for providing charitable relief.[65]

These were the loving acts of mercy and compassion that Leo thought would be evaluated favorably at the final judgment. The scene that he envisioned was that of the Lord seated upon his throne of power, accompanied by hosts of angels, surrounded by people from all the nations and throughout the ages, waiting to be judged. The just were to be separated from the unjust and the innocent from the guilty.[66] Those who had been generous were to be counted among the saved, while those who had been greedy, even if they had practiced all the other virtues vigilantly, were to be condemned to eternal torture.[67]

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[62] Augustine, *Serm.* 25.8, PL 38, 170–171. 'attendite illum jacentem sub porticu; attendite esurientem, attendite frigus patientem, attendite egenum, attendite peregrinum.'

[63] Leo, *Serm.* 12.2, 17 December 450, *Si fideliter, dilectissimi.*

[64] Leo, *Serm.* 89.5, 444, *Praedicationem nostram, dilectissimi.*

[65] Leo, *Serm.* 12.1, 17 December 450 "It is by loving that God restores us to his image. That he might find in us the pattern of his goodness, he gives us the very means by which we also perform the works that He does, namely lighting the lamps of our minds and inflaming us with the flame of his love, that we might love not only him, but also whatever he loves." 'Diligendo itaque nos Deus ad imaginem suam reparat, et ut in nobis formam suae bonitatis inveniat, dat unde ipsi quoque quod operatur operemur, accendens scilicet mentium nostrarum lucernas et igne nos suae caritatis inflammans, ut non solum ipsum, sed etiam quidquid diligit diligamus.'

[66] Leo, *Serm.* 9.2, November 443.

[67] Leo, *Serm.* 10.2, November 444. Leo, *Serm.* 9.2, November 443. Life was to be lived in the abundance of compassion. Even after neglecting acts of compassion a person

Almsgiving was considered such a powerful way to atone for sins that Leo thought that no charges would be brought against those in whom works of compassion had been found.[68] The scale on which the world would be judged weighed in the balance the quality of works that had been directed toward the destitute.[69] The idea that those who were not merciful did not deserve mercy in return was the same legal principle that governed his theology of justice.[70] Because the condescension of Christ, the act of becoming a human being by which God embraced human lowliness, was viewed as a generous act of mercy, Christians who benefited from that mercy were thought to have assumed a contractual obligation.[71] They were to repay their debt by showing that same mercy toward their fellow human beings, whose substance, like their own, shared in the human nature of Christ.[72] Those who failed to be merciful were convicted at the final judgment not only of being greedy, but of having violated the contractual obligation that they had assumed in their relationship with Christ. Because the contract had been broken, all the other sins they had committed during their lifetime, sins that might have been absolved had they understood and practiced the concept of mercy correctly, were thereby renewed.

The obligation to give did not mean that Christians were expected to put their own material support in peril. To maintain the visage of a cheerful giver, donations were to be well within the means of the donor.[73] Even the less wealthy and the poor were not to claim that their own poverty excused them from giving, but were urged to participate in almsgiving, provided that they, like the wealthy, kept for themselves no more than they needed.[74] "Even the smallest amount ('modicus') is what is enough for the poor. Neither their food nor their clothing is bur-

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might return to works of goodness ('pietas') and be absolved of the harsh sentence he might have otherwise endured. It was the grace of the savior that let "the impious abandon their ways, and the sinner escape from his habitual iniquity."

[68] Leo, *Serm.* 11.1, November 445.

[69] Leo, *Serm.* 11.1, November 445. Those who gave alms were not only saved in the final judgment, but increased their "moral and spiritual authority in the eyes of fellow Christians." Finn, *Almsgiving in the Later Roman Empire*, p. 221.

[70] Leo, *Serm.* 10.2, November 444.

[71] Leo, *Serm.* 10.2, November 444. "Since he who made human nature his own did not dissociate himself in any way from human lowliness." 'Quoniam qui naturam hominis suam fecit, in nullo se ab humana humilitate discrevit.'

[72] Cf. Leo, *Serm.* 52.2, 16 March 441, Sacramentum, dilectissimi.

[73] Leo, *Serm.* 88.5, 443, *Ad exorandam, dilectissimi.*

[74] Leo, *Serm.* 48.5, 13 March 455.

densome. Cheap is what they hunger for, cheap is what they thirst for, and the nakedness that needs to be clothed does not ask to be dressed ornately. Still our Lord is such a kind ('pius') arbiter of our works and such a beneficent ('benignus') judge that he would give a reward for just a cup of cold water. Because he is a just examiner of hearts, he will reward not only the cost of the deed, but also the intention ('affectus') of the one who performed it."[75] Leo was saying that generosity did not depend on the value of the gift, but on the intention of the giver, the desire to be merciful and the amount of goodwill involved.[76] The example of giving 'cold water' was the most vivid image of an impoverished person being charitable that came to his mind, for it implied that even those who lacked the means to purchase the wood that was needed for heating a cup of water might be included among the merciful.[77] Another example that he sometimes used was that of the widow in the Gospel of Matthew who contributed only two coins to the treasury of the synagogue, but whose morally excellent purpose in giving made her offering preferable to that of all the rest.[78] This way of construing charity meant that those who were counted among the poor, perhaps even those who were slated to be beneficiaries of charitable donations, were allowed, and even encouraged, to participate in almsgiving. It ensured that being designated 'poor' did not preclude one from the possibility of atoning for sins.[79] Because the poorer members of his congregations must have feared that sharing what little possessions they had might impoverish them, he portrayed wealth and poverty in paradoxical terms. Christian poverty, the loss of property that resulted from making charitable donations to the poor, made people wealthy in

[75] Leo, *Serm.* 14.2, 14 December 441, *In dominico agro, dilectissimi.*
[76] Leo, *Serm.* 8, November 442, *Christianae pietatis est, dilectissimi.*
[77] Leo, *Serm.* 44.2, 25 February 451, *Virtus, dilectissimi.*
[78] Ibid.
[79] Leo, *Serm.* 8, November 442. The poor were also to profit in the 'business of compassion' ('misericordiae commercium') by putting aside the possessions that they could afford to part with in order to support the needy. Though the rich were to be more generous with their gifts, the poor were not be outdone in the spirit of giving. And elsewhere he said, "The riches of goodwill never lack in value even when resources are scarce. Certainly, the donations of the rich are greater and of the less endowed smaller, but the fruit of their work is no different where the intention of the workers is the same." 'Numquam merito caret, etiam in tenui facultate, bonae voluntatis opulentia. Maiora quidem sunt inpendia divitum et minora mediocrum, sed non discrepat fructus operum, ubi idem est affectus operantium.' Leo, *Serm.* 40.4, 1 March 442, Recension A.

the way that mattered.[80] Being a little bit hungry was construed not as a state of poverty, but as the proper level of comfort for Christians.[81]

Determining how much one might give without becoming destitute was in all instances the responsibility of the giver. Everyone was to take account of his possessions and to give as much as possible.[82] While falling short in the accounting was a dangerous business, equal merit could accrue from any gift, no matter the size, provided that the ability to give did not exceed the outlay of compassion.[83] To prevent that from happening, Leo urged his congregations to be equitable judges between themselves and the poor.[84] Although the image of the secular judge was perhaps the most concise way of representing the responsibility for self-searching that lay with all potential donors, the ultimate judge was, of course, the 'just examiner' ('iustus inspector'), God. Knowing that the amount of compassion does not depend upon the monetary value of the gift, He "understands from what measure each person gives."[85] The idea that compassionate Christians were to ascertain precisely the material possessions and money that they needed to live, with the remainder going to the needy, was not unique to Leo. It had a well-developed tradition among such theologians as Augustine, who said, "What you withhold from yourselves by living more sparingly, you may deposit in the treasury of heaven;"[86] and "You have received food, you have received the necessary clothing. I mean what is necessary, not what is useless ('inane'), not what is superfluous ('superfluum'). What more do you get from your riches? … What are superfluous things for you are necessities for the poor."[87] Jerome agreed that the amount that exceeded what was determined to be the necessary food and clothing should be counted as a debt owed to the poor.[88]

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[80] Cf. Leo, *Serm.* 42.2, 12 March 444 (Recension A), *Praedicaturus vobis, dilectissimi.*

[81] Cf. Leo, *Serm.* 94.4, 458 (?), *Scio quidem, dilectissimi.*

[82] Leo, *Serm.* 20.3, c. 445 (?).

[83] Leo, *Serm.* 11.2, November 445.

[84] Ibid.

[85] Leo, *Serm.* 15.2, 13 December 442, *Confidenter vos, dilectissimi.* Leo, *Serm.* 10.1, November 444. To urge his congregations to make a just accounting, Leo acknowledged that only God alone could truly ascertain how much anyone should give, for "He is the one who knows what he has bestowed and upon whom he has bestowed it."

[86] Augustine, *Serm.* 210.12, PL 38, 1053. 'quod vobis parcius vivendo subtrahitis, in coelesti thesauro reponatis.'

[87] Augustine, *Serm.* 61 (12) 12, PL 38, 413. A fixed sum ('aliquid fixum') was to be set aside for alms. *Enarrationes in psalmos*, 146.17, PL 37, 1911.

[88] Jerome, *Ep.* 130.14, PL 22, 1118–1119.

The notion that superfluous wealth was to be distributed among the poor was another way of saying that such property had been merely entrusted to the wealthy and should not, therefore, be considered as their own. Since the crops, the vines, and the olive trees were, as Leo described them, the generous outpouring of the divine goodness, compassion and justice demanded that from this abundance should come the resources for helping the needy.[89] Although this was reminiscent of the Christian idea of communal property that was expressed most frankly by Augustine, who went so far as to suggest on a few occasions that keeping excess wealth was not merely being stingy toward the poor, but was the equivalent of taking their possessions fraudulently,[90] Leo never conceived of wealth in communal terms. The private accumulation of money was rather construed as good in and of itself, especially when it found its way into the hands of generous benefactors, where it provided the material means by which such persons might offer advantages to society.[91] The idea that property was ostensibly good was, with some reservations, common even among the Western theologians who believed that it should be communally owned. While the mere possession of wealth did not make a person good, Augustine thought that even the wealth that had made someone perceive himself as superior might be used for benevolent purposes.[92] This view of wealth as innately positive was notably different from that of the Manichaeans, for instance, whose contempt for material reality had led them to conclude that the private ownership of property should be abolished among the baptized.[93] Such a radical conception of wealth would not have been congenial to wealthy Christians, who undoubtedly believed that possessions were for their use and enjoyment alone, and whose donations the bishops gently solicited by attempting subtly to change such self-indulgent views.

From fear of offending these wealthy members of his congregations, Leo was perhaps reluctant to contradict the Roman law of property by claiming that all such superfluous wealth was communal. Because

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89 Leo, *Serm.* 16.1, 12 December 443, *Sublimitas quidem, dilectissimi.*

90 Augustine, *Serm.* 206.2, PL 38, 1011. He said on one occasion that it was similar to fraud if someone failed to give his superfluous possessions to the needy.

91 Leo, *Serm.* 10.1, November 444.

92 Augustine, *Serm.* 61 (2) 2, PL 38, 410.

93 See generally, M. Heuser, H.J. Klimkeit, *Studies in Manichaean Literature and Art*, *Nag Hammadi and Manichaean studies* 46 (Leiden, 1998); eds. H.J. Polotsky, A. Böhlig, *Kephalaia. Manichäische Handschriften der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin* (Stuttgart, 1940).

property belonged to its owner, those who owned a lot of it were to decide for themselves how much and whether they should give. Although Cyprian, writing in the third century, must have been thinking of reviving the Jewish system of involuntary tithes when he complained of Christians who refused to give even a tenth of their wealth to the poor, voluntary gifts continued to be the norm in Leo's day.[94] He gently worked his way into his listeners' minds by suggesting that poverty could be an abundance of eternal riches, and wealth, a state of spiritual impoverishment.[95] By this paradox of abundant poverty and impoverished wealth, which was repeated so often among late Roman theologians, Leo hoped to inspire the wealthy to use their resources generously. Far from undermining the private ownership of property by making it communal, he infused it with the potential to be useful.

How one acquired wealth was often the subject of disparaging remarks by late Roman theologians. Apart from tax collecting, usury ('foenus'), the practice of lending money for profit, was considered to be one of the most reprehensible ways of earning a living in the late Roman world. Having the money to lend implied the existence of the surplus wealth that was supposed to be used for the needy. To profit from such wealth was not only to take undue advantage of the plight of another,[96] but to earn money through a business transaction that was inherently unjust. The lender might wrongly despair either of losing the money he had loaned, or, even worse, of receiving something back, namely interest, that he had not given.[97] Even the wealthy were not immune from the deleterious effects of taking interest-bearing loans:

> [The usurers] lay snares for recent heirs, they search for rich young men through his friends, they attach themselves, pretending to be friends with his father or grandfather; they wish to learn his private needs. If they find

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[94] Cyprian, *De catholicae ecclesiae unitate*, 26, PL 4, 518.

[95] Leo, *Serm.* 10.2, November 444. "An abundance of such things is not prosperous, nor frugality commended if their resources serve themselves alone, if no poor are aided by their goods, if no sick are taken care of, if from the abundance of great resources no captive is redeemed, no stranger comforted, no exile assisted. Rich people like these are poorer than all of the poor. They forfeit those eternal revenues ('reditus') that they are able to obtain."

[96] John Chrysostom, *In Matthaeum homiliae*, 5 (5) 9, PL 57, 61–62. "There is nothing, indeed, baser, nothing more cruel than the usury of this world. For such a man turns a profit from others and makes his way from the calamities of others, and he demands wages from kindness, as though he were afraid to seem merciful, and under the cloak of kindness he digs the pit deeper." See Uhlhorn, *Christian Charity*, p. 383.

[97] Leo, *Serm.* 17.3, 17 December 444, *Evangelicis sanctionibus, dilectissimi.*

> anything, they reproach his modesty, they censure his decency because he had not placed hope and trust in them before. But if they don't hit upon snares resulting from anyone's needs, they make up stories. They say a magnificent estate is for sale, a large house, they overstate the yield of the crops, they exaggerate the yearly income, they urge him to buy it. They similarly extoll costly garments and magnificent ornaments. When he says that he doesn't have the money, they press their own upon him saying, 'use it like your own'.[98]

Leo similarly urged his congregations to be wary of the fast profits that such debtors, under the guise of being helpful, sometimes promised.[99] Drawn from the legal injunctions of Deuteronomy and Exodus, the law against usury was codified in the canons of the church. It required the clergy to lend money without interest and imposed a moral duty on the laity to do the same.[100] Because usury was permitted by the civil law, however,[101] the practice was so widespread that the church regularly condemned it, on the one hand, only to reconstitute it metaphorically for devotional purposes, on the other. Persons who sought to increase their wealth were, according to Leo, to transform their greed by becoming creditors and money-lenders of Christ, entrusting their possessions to him "who is a suitable guarantor of the poor and a most generous payer of interest."[102] Superfluous wealth was to be given to Christ in trust for the poor and held in an interest-bearing account that was the heavenly reward. The same metaphor of the lender and debtor of Christ had been used by Ambrose, Augustine, and others in an attempt to transform the love of money into something spiritually beneficial.

Considering the fact that so many Christian authors, including the evangelist Luke, Ambrose, John Chrysostom, and Peter Chrysologus,[103] despised the wealthy and painted a glowing picture of the poor—they were, after all, to inherit the kingdom—it is worth noting that Leo himself was not especially altruistic in portraying them. While Christ was considered by all the late Roman theologians to be present 'in the poor', Leo was eager to demonstrate that poverty, in and of itself, was

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98 Ambrose, *de Tobia*, 6.23, PL 14, 767. See Uhlhorn, *Christian Charity*, p. 383.

99 Leo, *Serm.* 17.2, 17 December 444.

100 See, e.g., Apostolic Canons, canon 44, Joannou, I, 2, p. 30.

101 Until the emperor Leo I legislated against it, usury was permitted among the laity. See Augustine, *Ep.* 153, PL 33, 665A.

102 Leo, *Serm.* 17.2, 17 December 444. 'qui et idoneus fideiussor est pauperum et largissimus redditor usurarum.'

103 Cf. Peter Chrysologus, *Serm.* 170, PL 52, 644–646.

not a blessed state. It is not then surprising that he found the beatitudes of the Gospel of Matthew, with their spiritual interpretation of poverty, more congenial to his views than the material poverty celebrated in the Gospel of Luke:

> [Matthew] said, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs'. Which poor he as Truth happened to be speaking about when he said, 'Blessed are the poor', would have been ambiguous if he had added nothing about the kind of poor to be understood. It might seem that poverty ('inopia') in and of itself, which many suffer in harsh and severe necessity, would suffice to deserve the kingdom of heaven. But when he said, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit', he showed that the kingdom of heaven is to be given to those whom humility of soul commends rather than lack of means.[104]

Although he subscribed to the conventional wisdom that the poor attained the virtue of humility more readily than the rich, he thought that even the wealthy attained it when their surplus money and property were the occasion for generous donations, and not for displaying their pride. In considering pride to be the source of the problem and not the money itself, Leo was consistent with Augustine, who thought that pride, the worst sin he could imagine, was mainly the province of the wealthy.[105]

The other pitfalls of wealth were well known to Leo, and he did not hesitate to rehearse them: when the rich hoarded their resources, keeping their superfluous money for themselves, their 'wealth' was not considered prosperous, nor was their 'frugality' commended.[106] The shortcomings of the wealthy were, however, no more ominous than those of the poor: "There are snares in the abundance of riches, there are snares in the trials of poverty. The former raises us to pride, the latter propels us into complaint."[107] To prevent the poor from falling into spiritual trouble they were not to be obsessed by the longing for temporal possessions and by the desire to grow wealthy in material things.[108] Jerome had been similarly reluctant to romanticize the poor. His interpretation of Matthew 25:40 ("When you did it to one of these least of my brethren you did it to me") made 'the poor' synonymous

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[104] Leo, *Serm.* 95.2, c. 446–461 (?), *Praedicante, dilectissimi.*
[105] Augustine, *Serm.* 14.2, PL 38, 112.
[106] Leo, *Serm.* 10.1, November 444.
[107] Leo, *Serm.* 49.1, 17 February 457 (?). 'Insidiae sunt in divitiarum amplitudine, insidiae in paupertatis angustiis. Illae elevant ad superbiam, haec incitant ad querelam.'
[108] Leo, *Serm.* 95.2, c. 446–461 (?).

with those who were 'poor in spirit', those to whom Christ said, "My brothers and my mother are those who do the will of my Father," rather than with the materially destitute.[109] It has already been suggested that he painted the poor and otherwise needy in colors so unappealing as to suggest that he himself found them unsavory. The consequence of this way of thinking was to make the state of being wealthy that much more acceptable.

That material possessions, whether inherited or otherwise acquired, were, ideally, an instrument of goodness ('instrumentum pietatis') implied to Leo that God distributed them purposefully and providentially.[110] The worst he could say, and he said it only once, about material possessions, apart from the impropriety of hoarding them, was that one should be a steward, rather than an owner, of earthly things.[111] Because excess wealth was perceived as the fruits of divine largess, its purpose was simultaneously to "free the poor from the burden of need and [the wealthy] from the multitude of [their] sins."[112] Wealth was thereby construed as the instrument through which God enabled virtuous Christians to perform charitable deeds. Even the state of poverty was transformed into the material condition that laid the foundation necessary for imitating the divine goodness ('divina bonitas'), for without the existence of poverty there might be no occasion to give.[113] Construing poverty as essential to a broader ethical scheme was Leo's solution to the problem of justice raised by the unequal distribution of wealth among Christians. It answered the question of why the good suffered the indignity of material need.

Others had been more circumspect in treating such a difficult problem. The anonymous author of the Pelagian treatise, *De divitiis*, rejected the idea that the unequal distribution of wealth, no matter how benevolently its consequences were used, could ever be attributed to the justice of God. "[W]hat theory of justice, what principle of equity permits one man to enjoy the freedom of plenty and another to suffer the con-

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[109] Jerome, *Comm. in Matth.* 25:40, PL 26, 197: "[Matt. 25:40] does not seem to me to have been said generally of the poor, but of those who are poor in spirit." Ramsey, "Almsgiving …," p. 229.

[110] Leo, *Serm.* 92.3, c. 454, *Apostolica institutio, dilectissimi.*

[111] Leo, *Serm.* 89.6, c. 444. "Divine providence has wonderfully arranged that there be in the church both holy poor and good rich people, who help one another from their very diversity."

[112] Leo, *Serm.* 6.1, November 440.

[113] Leo, *Serm.* 17.4, 17 December 444.

straints of need. And if we know that some are rich by God's decree, while others are poor, how is it that we can sometimes see their positions reversed and very often undergoing a change to the opposite?"[114] Avarice, in particular, was construed as the vice that led to riches, the *sine qua non* of accumulating wealth.[115] It might seem strange that a Pelagian, who believed that good works were essential to the doctrine of salvation, should miss the opportunity to view wealth in terms that would allow it to become an instrument of goodness. By separating the concept of wealth from the physical reality of material possessions wealth was reinterpreted metaphorically as an overabundance derived from unnecessary things.[116] Because the storehouse of earthly treasures was made by God for the common consumption, people were to retain only what was needed.[117] Why was the material distribution of wealth and poverty indifferent to the moral quality of human acts? "Because God has nothing to do with money" was the answer the Pelagians proposed. It led inexorably to the notion that property was evil and that the private ownership of it should be abolished. We have already seen how impossible it was to maintain that view in the mainstream Western churches. To counter similar claims that had been made by Eustathius, the bishop of Sebaste, and the rigorous group of ascetics who were his followers in fourth-century Armenia, the Synod of Gangra passed a canon explicitly affirming the value of riches: "We do not condemn wealth if it is combined with justice and benevolence,"[118] a view that most aptly represents not only Leo, but the majority of the Western theologians.

That consensus did not stop such authors as Jerome and Ambrose from occasionally railing against the malevolence of riches: "the fruit of the earth was given by the Lord God to all for their common use ('communem ad usam')," [119] said Ambrose, and "for us the riches

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[114] *De divitiis*, 8.2, PLS 1, 1389; trans. B.R. Rees, *The Letters of Pelagius and His Followers* (Woodbridge, 1991), p. 183.

[115] *De divitiis*, 2, PLS 1, 1381; Rees, *The Letters of Pelagius*, p. 175. "For just as a man possesses avarice because of riches … so he seeks riches because of avarice, and riches are able to continue in existence only so long as they are protected by their mother, as it were, that is, avarice."

[116] *De divitiis*, 10.9 (10), PLS 1, 1397; Rees, *The Letters of Pelagius*, pp. 190–191.

[117] *De divitiis*, 5.1, PLS 1, 1383.

[118] See Synod of Gangra, epilogue.

[119] Ambrose, *Expositio evangelii secundum Lucam*, 7, 247, PL 15, 1855. On the church's negative view of wealth, see R.H. Weaver, "Wealth and poverty in the early church," *Interpretation* 41 (1987), pp. 368–381.

are Another's [Luke 16:12], because they are beyond nature, and they are neither born with us nor do they die with us."[120] Jerome attacked the excesses of the Roman aristocracy, whose matrons crammed their wardrobes with dresses and changed their gowns daily, who dyed their parchments purple, who melted gold into lettering and decked out their books with jewels, while Christ lay dying naked at their doors.[121] Elsewhere Ambrose repeated the common *dictum* that wealth, in and of itself, was not reprehensible, only the pride and extravagance that often accompanied it.[122] Given this ambivalence toward wealth among Western theologians, what is striking about Leo is his confidence that God intentionally and purposefully did not provide the material means by which the poor themselves might satisfy their needs. The idea that wealth was ostensibly benevolent was, therefore, closely intertwined with the conviction that the material disparity between the rich and poor existed for a reason.[123] Bestowing wealth upon some, while leaving others destitute, was no longer the problem of divine justice that had vexed so many of Leo's contemporaries. Income disparity was reinterpreted as a profoundly calculated act of divine mercy that provided Christians with the material conditions under which charitable donation might be performed.[124]

The ability to transform material wealth into a spiritual reward was not necessarily an innate talent. It required that Christians receive a kind of ascetic training that was not to be overly rigorous.[125] They were, according to Leo, to maintain a balance in self-restraint, neither indulging the body nor denying it the necessary sustenance, by feeding and nourishing the body not to make it comfortable, but to enable it to render the service that it owed.[126] This view of the body was thoroughly Pauline in its refusal to make the body an object of

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[120] Ambrose, *Expositio evangelii secundum Lucam*, 7, 246, PL 15, 1854.

[121] Jerome, *Ad Eustochium*, 22.32, PL 22, 417–418.

[122] Ambrose, *Expositio evangelii secundum Lucam*, 8.13, PL 15, 1859; ibid. 5.69, PL 15, 1740.

[123] Leo, *Serm.* 89.6, 444. 'et illis et vobis multa virtutum materia defuisset, si nec illos ad patientiae coronam inopia exerceret, nec vos ad misericordiae gloriam copia provocaret.' "Much of the material of virtue would be lacking to them and to you, if poverty did not drive them to the crown of patience, nor abundance lead you to the glory of compassion." The contrast between 'you' and 'them' leaves no doubt that Leo addressed those with means.

[124] Leo, *Serm.* 19.4, 14 December 452, *Cum de adventu regni Dei.*

[125] Leo, *Serm.* 19.3, 14 December 452.

[126] Leo, *Serm.* 71.5, 3/4 April 443, *Sermone proximo, dilectissimi.*

loathing: "None ever hated their body, but nourished it and looked after it," was the maxim Leo repeated.[127] Disciplining the body was also the means by which physical desires and passions were made subservient to the dignity of the soul.[128] True peace and freedom from bodily desires was possible for human beings when the flesh was ruled by the soul and the soul was governed by God, whose leadership over the soul was analogous to the reason that guided human beings once their body and soul had come into the proper arrangement.[129] The light of reason ('illuminatio rationis') that was the result of this orderly relationship fostered the discipline of goodness ('pietas'), the principle that guided the commandment of the law to love God and neighbor.[130] It distinguished human beings from animals, which, being devoid of reason, did not know how to provide for the necessities of anyone other than their offspring. This relationship between body and soul, under the light of reason, was generated by denying the flesh its physical satisfaction through which the sharpness of the mind ('acies mentis') might be dulled and the strength of the heart ('vigor cordis') blunted.[131] The reason that emerged from managing the passions prudently, therefore, cultivated the virtue of mercy by which the image of God was restored in human beings. Although human beings could not perfectly duplicate the rationality of divine justice, their imperfection as suffering, fragile creatures paradoxically endowed them with the compassion that enabled them to perform acts of mercy. Implementing social justice was thereby embraced as a profoundly human exercise.

Fasting was the ascetic discipline that produced the state of bodily denial, the quieting of the passions that enabled the soul to reign so that nature might retain its proper order. It was the same discipline that prevented the lower emotional states, such as bodily desires, from prevailing in a disordered fashion over the higher.[132] "What can be more effective than fasting," asked Leo, "by the observance of which we draw near to God, and we, in resisting the devil, overcome seductive

[127] Ibid., citing Eph. 5.29.

[128] Leo, *Serm.* 19.3, 14 December 452. Christians were to quiet the passions by abstaining from the "malice of hatred, from the laxness of luxury, from the distress of anger, [and] from the desire for vengeance."

[129] Leo, *Serm.* 39.2, 9 February 441. The proper relationship between body and soul was realized once the mind, under the guidance of its ruler (i.e., God), "trampled on the lures of earthly desire and did not allow 'sin to reign in its body.'"

[130] Leo, *Serm.* 20.3, c. 445 (?).

[131] Leo, *Serm.* 19.1, 14 December 452.

[132] Leo, *Serm.* 71.5, 3/4 April 443.

vices? Fasting has always been food for virtue. From abstinence, in short, come chaste thoughts, rational wills ('rationabiles voluntates'), and more wholesome advice ('salubriora consilia'). Through voluntary affliction, the flesh dies to concupiscence while the spirit is renewed with virtues."[133] A rational temperance guided by reason preserved this proper ordering of body and soul by resisting the pleasure of eating, because excess food was thought to burden the body and make it unhealthy.[134] That was true in spite of the fact that the soul governed the desires of the flesh by imbuing it with sensation ('sensus') and motion ('motus'). When ordered correctly through the faculty of reason, the soul rejected anything contrary to its substance, such as superfluous food, that might make it act improperly.

Because desire was governed by the soul, Leo thought that depriving the body through fasting did not suffice to correct the soul and atone for sins. Almsgiving needed to accompany the fast in order to make it effective, for fasting alone was thought merely to afflict the flesh and make it suffer without cleansing the soul. As Peter Chrysologus said, "What the sun is to the day … fasting is to alms ('eleemosyna'). As the radiance of the sun brings greater brightness to the day and dispels the total darkness of the clouds, so almsgiving sanctifies the sanctity of a fast, and with the light of piety casts out all the night of desire ('cupiditas'). And lest someone should be unaware, what the soul is to the body, generosity ('largitas') is to fasting."[135] Leo, to an even greater degree than his predecessors and contemporaries, was committed to the idea that fasting without giving alms was the equivalent of self-absorbed greed.[136] It was, on the one hand, a selfish obsession with quieting the bodily passions while being oblivious to the suffering of others, and, on the other, a greedy acquisition of surplus food that might have been more properly distributed among the poor. This relationship between fasting and alms was made explicit when he urged Christians to feed the poor with the food that had been withheld in fasting.[137] The

[133] Leo, *Serm.* 13, 15 December 440, *Quod temporis ratio*; on the relationship between fasting and alms, cf. Augustine, *Ep.* 130 (13) 24, PL 33, 504.

[134] Leo, *Serm.* 19.1, 14 December 452.

[135] Peter Chrysologus, *Serm.* 8, PL 52, 209; Ramsey, 'Almsgiving …', p. 245.

[136] Leo, *Serm.* 15.2, 13 December 442.

[137] Leo, *Serm.* 80.1, June 442. See also Leo, *Serm.* 13, 15 December 440. "Since the salvation of our souls is not attained by fasting alone, let us supplement our fasting with compassion for the poor. Let us spend on virtue what we withhold from pleasure. Let the abstinence of fasters become nourishment for the poor. Let us be zealous for the defense of widows, the benefit of orphans, the consolation of mourners, the peace of

identical sentiment had already been expressed by Augustine: "What is subtracted from ourselves by fasting and abstaining from our usual foods should be added to [alms]," and by Peter Chrysologus, who put it metaphorically: "Although the faster may cultivate his heart, cleanse his flesh, root out his vices, sow virtues, if he does not [water his plants with] streams of mercy ('misericordia') he does not bear fruit. O faster, when your mercy fasts your field fasts too. O faster, what you pour out in mercy overflows in your barn."[138] In repeating such views, Leo revealed that fasting was to remain the means by which the soul, tempered by reason, was made receptive to the 'eternal delights', the merciful compassion that flowed to it when the relationship between the soul and the body was properly maintained.

To confirm that fasting was not the final word in atoning for sins, Leo excused from the fast those whose failing health or bodily weakness prevented them from participating fully, so long as they gave food to a 'hungry pauper'.[139] Like Augustine, who sometimes made fasting, but not prayers and alms, unnecessary, Leo said that food could not defile a person who had been cleansed by the distribution of alms.[140] Because fasting was implicitly understood by Leo as a self-interested ascetic practice aimed at quieting the passions of the individual, it could either be dispensed with altogether or transformed into an act of altruism only when it was accompanied by charitable donations.

What distinguished Leo from his predecessors was his unambivalent dedication to the sin-atoning power of alms and to the benevolence of wealth. Both ideas were mutually enforcing principles in that almsgiving had the power to ameliorate sin because surplus wealth, the alms to be given, had a divine purpose. It was bestowed upon human beings that they might imitate the divine mercy, of which they themselves had been the beneficiaries. Charity was, therefore, the only virtue that linked the celestial and terrestrial realms because it had the power to transform material goods into heavenly riches. His contribution, as I have suggested, was to make that transformation palpable in everyday human interactions, through which compassion, the emotion that

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adversaries. Take in the stranger, relieve the oppressed, clothe the naked, care for the sick."

[138] Augustine, *Serm.* 209.2, PL 38, 1046–1047 ('Ipsis adjiciatur, quod nobis jejunando et a cibis solitis abstinendo detrahitur.') Peter Chrysologus, *Serm.* 43, PL 52, 322.

[139] Leo, *Serm.* 87.3, 442.

[140] Ibid.

enabled one human being to feel complete empathy for the suffering of another, became an acceptable way to relate to human misery. Fasting was made subservient to alms because it sometimes improperly silenced the same passions and emotions that enabled people to identify with suffering, and, therefore, to act as ethical beings. Christians were never to become so detached from suffering, so dispassionate in their response to pain, or so hardened to misery as to be unmoved by the human condition. The paradigm for feeling such pain and weakness compassionately was, as I suggest in the the following chapter, the experience of Christ as a suffering human being.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE HUMANITY OF CHRIST AS A MODEL FOR COMPASSION

1. *Assembling a christology*

That human beings should feel altruism for each other merely because they are human beings and that poverty should be addressed in the context of compassion for human suffering were the humanitarian ideals that shaped Leo's christology.

Its most famous articulation was the *Tome* to Flavian of Constantinople (449), a measured response to the contrasting errors of Nestorius, the former bishop of Constantinople, and of Eutyches, the archimandrite in Constantinople. Nestorius taught that Christ consisted in a human and divine nature, but had failed to convince his detractors that a single person was the subject of both natures. Christ, therefore, had not only two natures, as Leo and the catholics believed, but also two distinct persons.[1] Eutyches, in contrast, proposed that Christ had one nature, the divine, being unwilling to acknowledge that God could have ever appeared in a fully human form.[2]

To demonstrate that both natures were vivid and real, Leo said that Christ was fully human and fully divine, the two natures, substances, and forms connected ontologically as a single person ('persona'):

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[1] Note that Leo spoke not only of two natures, but also of two substances and forms. See J.M. Armitage, *A Twofold Solidarity. Leo the Great's Theology of Redemption* (Strathfield, 2005), p. 88. On Nestorius' christology, see e.g., H.E.W. Turner, "Nestorius Reconsidered," *SP* 13 (1975), pp. 306–321, who concludes that Nestorius' theory of *prosopic* union was inadequate to establish an ontological basis for the union. Others disagree. See e.g., M.V. Anastos, "Nestorius was Orthodox," *DOP* 16 (1962), pp. 119–140; R.C. Chesnut, "The Two Prosopa in Nestorius' 'Bazaar of Heracleides,'" *JTS* 29 (1978), pp. 392–409.

[2] Even when the bishops at Chalcedon pressured Eutyches to change his views, he continued to assert that Christ was "from two natures before the Incarnation" but one nature after it. For the transcript of his testimony, see *Chalced. (451) Gesta. Actio I* (d. 8 m. Oct. a. 451) (de Dioscoro). *ACO* II, I, 1, p. 139, ll. 13–25; p. 143, ll. 10–11. Leo mentioned his testimony at Ephesus II in *Ep.* 35.3, 13 June 449, *Licet per nostros*, Jaffé 429.

> [The Word] is indeed one and the same, (which should be said often), truly Son of God and truly Son of man … The nativity of the flesh is a manifestation of human nature; the giving birth of a Virgin is the proof of divine power. The infancy of a little child is shown in the humility of the cradle; the greatness of the Almighty is proclaimed by the voices of angels. He whom Herod impiously plotted to kill is similar to human beings in helpless infancy; but he whom the Magi joyously worshipped on their knees is the Lord of all.[3]

By the antitheses of divine glory and human weakness,[4] Leo formulated a christology that not only opposed the errors of Nestorius and Eutyches but, more significantly, developed the contours of a fully human Christ who had suffered as an emotional human being. While Grillmeier has argued that the complete experience of human suffering and compassion was merely an unrealized possibility in Leo,[5] I suggest that the ideal of a compassionate humanity, whose salvation unfolds in the vicissitudes of history, has been fully realized when christology is placed in the context of a theology of poverty, justice, and history. Leo's development of the human nature of Christ was, as I shall argue here, the foundation for integrating human compassion and altruism into a broader theological plan.

Although his distinctive contribution was to articulate the full humanity of Christ, the *Tome*, famous for having been incorporated into the doctrinal definitions of the Council of Chalcedon (451), was not entirely original. So many of its passages are similar to his earlier work that it is plausible to conclude that his notary Prosper of Aquitaine gathered excerpts from sermons and letters and wove them together to produce a composite christological statement.[6] Even by the late-fifth century, Gennadius of Marseille, the semi-Pelagian presbyter of Massilia whose works included treatises against Nestorius, Eutyches, and the Pelagians, suggested in his *De Viris Illustribus* (a continuation c. 467–

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[3] Similar ideas are found in Gaudentius, *Serm.* 19, PL 20, 983–986. Leo, *Ep.* 28.4, 13 June 449, *Lectis dilectionis tuae*, Jaffé 423. On this passage, Armitage notes that in whatever Christ does there is a manifestation of divine glory and of human degradation. He is not at one time God and another time man. Armitage, *A Twofold Solidarity*, p. 87. The union of the two natures consists in the communion between them. Ibid.

[4] On Leo's "predilection for antitheses and rhythmic parallelism" see A. Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition* (London, Oxford, 1975), vol. 1, pp. 531, 533.

[5] Ibid., p. 535.

[6] For a discussion of the relationship between them, see N.W. James, "Leo the Great and Prosper of Aquitaine: A Fifth Century Pope and His Adviser," *JTS* 44 (1993), pp. 554–584.

480 of Jerome's work of the same name) that Prosper had probably compiled the *Tome* at Leo's request from his earlier sermons when he, Prosper, was living in Rome.[7] The similarities between several passages from the *Tome* and from the works of Prosper suggest that he also incorporated some of his own theological statements. Not even its structure was original to Leo. There is reason to believe, as scholars have suggested, that Prosper followed the plan of his *Epistula ad Augustinum*, in which he described to Augustine the objections to his doctrine of grace that were being raised at the monastery of St. Victor in the city of Marseille.[8] To fully appreciate the nuances of Leo's christological thought, not only should the *Tome* be considered, which is an amalgamation of his earlier work that he probably did not compile, but also his *corpus* of letters and sermons.[9]

Even when considered in its entirety, Leo's christological statements are not altogether original, for he drew freely from such Latin theologians as Augustine, Ambrose, and John Cassian. Although he never slavishly copied from them, he integrated selectively their theological views, weaving them together into a coherent whole that gave his christology a new dimension. His method was to incorporate and embellish upon, rather than reinvent, what he understood to be the tradition that he had inherited. By integrating the theological teachings from the past, rejecting some aspects of the doctrines of his predecessors while incorporating others, he developed a richly nuanced understanding of the humanity of Christ that distinguished his christological thought from the imposing intellectual legacy that he had received from Augustine. To consider why Leo developed the teachings that he did is to suggest how he made his christology a compelling response to the anxieties that late Roman Christians were facing.

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[7] J. Gaidioz, "Saint Prosper d'Aquitaine et le tome à Flavien," *RevSR* 3 (Paris, 1949), pp. 270–301. For the parallels between the *Tome* and Leo's earlier sermons, see ibid., pp. 274–280. For the parallels between the *Tome* and the writings of Prosper, see ibid., pp. 288, 291–297. Gaidioz concludes that Leo made the final revisions to the *Tome*. For Gennadius' comment, see his *De Virus Illustribus*, 84, PL 58, 1108, where he said that Prosper drafted the letters that Leo wrote against Eutyches, including the *Tome*.

[8] The *Epistula ad Augustinum* can also be found in Augustine, *Ep.* 225, PL 33, 1002–1007. The objection was that Augustine's view of grace left no incentive for good works and moral conduct. Ibid. 1003. Prosper first describes the view of the Pelagians and then rebuts it by explaining the inherent dangers.

[9] Because so many of Leo's sermons and letters incorporate his earlier works, it is not generally feasible to map out the chronological progress of his thought. That is why I treat Leo's christology thematically.

2. *Polemics shape the development of Christ's human nature*

Leo's view of Christ as being simultaneously human and divine was articulated as a response to the various christological heresies that he was intent on refuting.[10] We have already seen that he targeted the Manichaeans in a spectacular display of intolerance by which he was determined to eliminate the sect from Rome and the rest of Italy. In addition to the sexual allegations already mentioned, his rationale for orchestrating this campaign against them was their assent to an incorrigible docetism[11] that held that Christ, having a false body, did not possess true humanity;[12] that the Son of God who united with human flesh could never have been born in a real physical body composed of ordinary human substance;[13] and that a Christ who was not born in the reality of human flesh did not die and rise from the dead. Although he was certainly effective in painting Manichaean christology as antithetical to catholic views, the representation was not completely accurate. As the 'Third Messenger' who, after the 'First Man' and the 'Living Spirit', was sent down to battle the forces of darkness, Jesus experienced real physical suffering, although he did so as a God who was the modal expression of the Godhead.[14] The idea of a suffering deity, known as 'Patripassianism', that this mythology embodied was just as repugnant to orthodoxy as the docetism that Leo condemned. It is worth noting that Leo probably formed his impression of the sect as docestists mainly from reading Augustine, whose *Contra Faustum* attributed to the Manichaean theologian, Faustus, the view that Jesus

[10] As Grillmeier also notes, idem, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. 1, p. 532.

[11] because they renounced the sacrament of human salvation. Leo, *Serm.* 42.5.1, 12 March 444 (Recension A), *Praedicaturus vobis*.

[12] See *Serm.* 34.4.1, 6 January 444 (Recension A), *Iustum et rationabile*, where Leo put it more vividly: '[ ] ut sibi falsi corporis fingerent Christum, qui nihil in se solidum, nihil verum oculis hominum actionibusque (variant) praebuerit, sed simulatae carnis vacuam imaginem demonstrarit.' "[their views are so unorthodox] that they fashion for themselves a Christ with a false body, who presented nothing in him that was solid, nothing that was real to the eyes and touch of human beings, but displayed an empty likeness of simulated flesh." Here 'actio' should be interpreted as 'touch', according to the suggestion of Quesnel in PL 54, 248, note e.

[13] Rather, he could never have "inserted himself into the female womb." Leo, *Serm.* 34.4.1, 6 January 444 (Recension A).

[14] according to the Coptic *Kephalaia* composed by the Manichaeans. eds. Schipper, Van Oort, *Sermons and Letters against the Manichaeans: selected fragments: St. Leo the Great*, pp. 100, 104.

only appeared to undergo the experiences of humanity and then to die as a human being.[15]

This polemical construction of the Manichaeans not only served Leo's deeper theological purpose to articulate the full humanity of Christ, but also influenced his representation of the other heretics, against whom he argued in his sermons and letters.[16] In one Christmas sermon that he delivered in 443 (and in another he delivered nine years later), he developed a schematic portrait of each of the heresies that is useful for unearthing the polemical methods he used in formulating his christological statements.[17] The Manichaean heresy was made out to be the most sinister of all,[18] its refusal to acknowledge that Christ was truly human having severed the soteriological connection between Christ and human beings that was necessary to share in his regeneration. Although the other heresies failed to acknowledge at least one element that was essential to orthodoxy, each, as Leo saw it, contained something that was true and, therefore, paled in comparison to the Manichaean error.[19] Arians, for instance, recognized the divinity as immutable, even though they thought that the Son of God, being a creature, was less than the Father and that the Holy Spirit was created by the Son along with everything else.[20] They acknowledged that Christ's divinity was true divinity, but thought incorrectly that his flesh did not share the same nature as God. Wrongly attributing to the divinity of Christ what belonged to the human substance, they posited a greater and lesser God.[21] What Leo ascribed to the Arians was generally consistent with what we know from other sources.[22] To confirm their conception of the divine Logos as a subordinate being in a hierar-

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[15] Augustine, *Contra Faustum*, 26.1.

[16] They were never confronted as directly and purposefully as were the Manichaeans.

[17] On the description of the heresies, see Leo, *Serm.* 24.3–5, 25 December 443, *Semper quidem*; *Serm.* 28.4–5, 25 December 452, *Cum semper nos.*

[18] Shortly after their trial, Leo said that the errors of the pagans and Jews flowed together in them like filth coagulating in the bilgewater ('sentina') (i.e., of a ship). *Serm.* 16.4, 12 December 443. See also *Serm.* 24.4, 25 December 443.

[19] Leo, *Serm.* 24.5, 25 December 443.

[20] Leo, *Serm.* 24.5, 25 December 443.

[21] Leo, *Serm.* 28.4, 25 December 452.

[22] These views are found, for instance, in the Arian literature from the West. See e.g., *Epistula de fide, vita et obitu Ulfilae*, which is found in Maximinus, *Dissertatio Maximini contra Ambrosium*; see also the anonymous *Sermonum Arianorum Fragmenta Antiquissima* and *Opus imperfectum in Matthaeum*, all of which are discussed below. See generally Y.-M. Duval, "Sur l'arianism de Ariens d'Occident," *Mélange de science religieuse* 26 (1969), pp. 145–153.

chical scheme, they adduced evidence from Scripture proving that Jesus differed from God, including that he hungered, thirsted, and suffered as a human being.

The description of the other heresies followed this twofold structure: Macedonius did not accept that the Holy Spirit was divine, although he subscribed to the commonly-held view that the relationship between the Father and the Son in the Trinity was that of one power sharing the same nature. Sabellius perceived correctly that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit shared a unity of substance, but he departed from orthodoxy when he said that the members of the Trinity were singular rather than equal: the Trinity, according to Sabellius, was one and the same person under a triple name.[23] Photinus erred in the opposite direction by denying that Christ was the same substance as God, but acknowledged correctly that the man in Christ was made of the substance of human beings. Apollinaris understood that Christ assumed the true nature of human flesh, but insisted that the flesh he assumed was lacking a human soul, its place inhabited by the divinity.[24] The cumulative effect of this repetition was that only Manichaeaism, depicted as an extreme form of docetism, was thoroughly antithetical to orthodox views. This enabled Leo to present himself as a fair and, therefore, authoritative dispenser of ecclesiastical discipline who was capable of acknowledging that even heretics, apart from the Manichaeans, understood some aspect of the truth. It made his condemnation of the Manichaeans seem that much more reasonable.

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[23] If that were the case, Leo warned, then the birth and death of Christ would be predicated of the same person that was the Word and the human being, although change and suffering were human conditions that were never to be ascribed to God whom even the heretics believed was immutable and impassive. Leo, *Serm.* 24.5, 25 December 443. Macedonius was known as the 'Pneumatomachos' or 'the contender against the Spirit'. See e.g., Gregory of Nyssa, *Sermo de Spiritu Sancto adversus Pneumatomachos Macedonianos*; Theodore of Mopsuestia, *Disputatio cum Macedonianis*. Contrary to the Sabellians, orthodox doctrine understood the Trinity to be a unity of substance, but not a union of persons. See e.g., Hilary of Poitiers, *Trinitas*, 4.42. "God the Father and God the Son are absolutely one, not by a union of person, but by a unity of substance." 'absolute pater Deus et filius Deus unum sunt, non unione personae, sed substantiae unitate.'

[24] Leo, *Serm.* 24.5, 25 December 443. See ed. H. Lietzmann, *Apollinaris von Laodicea und seine Schule*, Texte und Untersuchungen (Tübingen, 1904), pp. 244, 263. The popular opinion was that Photinus taught that Christ was merely an ordinary man. See e.g., Socrates, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, VII.32, GCS, N.F. 1, pp. 380–382, where he reports that Nestorius was accused of following this heretic.

Even this schematic portrait was not original to Leo. When he was the archdeacon of the Roman church in 430 he commissioned John Cassian to write the treatise on the Incarnation against Nestorius.[25] In it, Cassian argued that Nestorius was similar to Pelagius in thinking that Jesus was an ordinary man whose virtuous life merited his union with divinity.[26] To refute this error two methods were used: texts from Scripture were gathered to prove that Mary was indeed the Mother of God and that Jesus was divine; and heresies were enumerated in chronological order, described briefly, and acknowledged to be partly consistent with catholic doctrine. Thirteen years later (443) Leo presented a similar list of heresies[27] and the comparable method of describing them as containing some kernel of the truth in order to show that the Manichaean heresy was the most pernicious of all.

This argument was well in place by the time Leo took on a new opponent, Eutyches, who had been condemned by Flavian in November 448, restored to orthodoxy by the Robber Synod in 449, only to be sent into exile by the Council of Chalcedon two years later.[28] Based on the report he received from Flavian, who had been deposed by the Robber Synod for subscribing to the orthodox view that Christ had two natures, Leo concluded that Eutyches was a docetist who believed that the body of Christ was not of the same substance as human flesh and that it was not composed of human matter ('consparsio').[29] To refine that view, he compared Eutyches to the Apollinarians, the heretics who believed that the dignity of the Word replaced the human soul in the

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[25] the same treatise mentioned in Chapter 1.1. On the commissioning of the work, see Gennadius, *De Virus Illustribus*, 61, PL 58, 1096, and John Cassian, *De Incarn.*, PL 50, 9, note a.

[26] John Cassian, *De Incarn. Chr.*, 5.1. Leo generally agreed. See *Serm.* 28.5.1, 25 December 452, where the union, according to Leo's understanding of Nestorius, was based only on Christ's merit ('sola dignitas'). On the connection between Nestorius and Pelagius as the Latin thinkers perceived it, see J. Plagnieux, "Le grief de complicité entre erreurs nestorienne et pélagienne. D'Augustin à Cassien par Prosper d'Aquitaine," *Revue des études Augustiniennes* 2 (1956), pp. 391–402. See also Quasten, iv, p. 517.

[27] although he excluded two of them, the Ebionites and the Eunomians.

[28] For basic bibliography on Eutyches, see E. Schwartz, *Der Prozeß des Eutyches, Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, München, Philosophisch-historische Klasse, Abt. 5 (Munich, 1929); G. May, "Das Lehrverfahren gegen Eutyches in November des Jahres 448," *AHC* 21 (1989), pp. 1–61.

[29] Leo, *Ep.* 28.5, 13 June 449, Jaffé 423. Leo was especially concerned that Eutyches had denied the reality of Christ's physical suffering ('corporea passio'). See also Leo, *Ep.* 26.1, 448/9? *Pietate et recta*; *Ep.* 28.5, 13 June 449, Jaffé 423. *Ep.* 26 did not reach Leo until one week after he sent the *Tome*, as we learn from *Ep.* 36, 20 June 449, *Litteras tuae dilectionis*, Jaffé 430. Leo, *Ep.* 35.1, 13 June 449, Jaffé 429.

body of Christ. Other branches of the sect thought that he lacked only a human mind, the function of reason (i.e., 'rationis officium') being performed by the divinity of the Word.[30] While Eutyches was made to subscribe to both views, Leo also attributed to him a third Apollinarian teaching, that Christ had only one nature.[31] We know from the treatises that Ps. Athanasius, Gregory Nazianzen, and Gregory of Nyssa wrote against him that Apollinaris developed a Logos-sarx christology in which Christ consisted in a single nature composed of a human body and soul whose life-giving force was the Logos that replaced the rational human mind.[32] The result was a Christ whose human nature was incomplete. This intrinsic unity of Logos and flesh was said to be characteristic of Eutyches' christological view that after the union of two natures, only one nature, the divine, remained, there being little or nothing left of the human substance.[33] In ascribing to Christ a single nature, Eutyches was understood to suggest that the union of the divine and human natures was so undifferentiated that the divinity alone would have been born from Mary and that "it alone, in a deceptive appearance, would have undergone nourishment and bodily growth."[34] This way of construing the heresy made Eutyches subscribe to a docetism, in which Christ's humanity was flawed from being detached from the substance of his mother, and to a Patripassianism, in which the divinity was defective from being made subject to change.[35]

Eutyches saw the matter differently.[36] He thought he was just as committed as Leo was not only to preventing the divinity of his theological

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[30] Leo, *Serm.* 28.4, 25 December 452.

[31] Leo, *Ep.* 165.2, 17 August 458, *Promisisse me*, Jaffé 542; see also *Ep.* 124.2–7, 15 June 453, *Sollicitudini meae, quam*, Jaffé 450, which repeats much of what is said in *Ep.* 165. Eutyches denied the charge in a libel he sent to Leo. *Ep.* 21.3, December 448, *De mea in Dominum*.

[32] See e.g., Ps. Athanasius, *De incarnatione contra Apollinarium libri ii*; Gregory of Nazianzus, *Ep.* 102, *ad Cledonium*; Gregory of Nyssa, *Adversus Apollinaristas ad Theophilum episcopum Alexandrinum*. See Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. 1, pp. 329–330, 334.

[33] See Chapter 5, n. 2. Eutyches was such an ardent follower of Cyril of Alexandria's early (i.e., single-nature) christological thought that no one could convince him to subscribe to two natures in Christ after the union.

[34] Leo, *Serm.* 28.5, 25 December 452. 'per ludificatoriam speciem sola subiit nutrimenta et incrementa corporea'.

[35] lit: "through the diversity of substance ('per diversitatem substantiae')." Leo, *Serm.* 30.2, 25 December 454, *Saepe, ut nostis, dilectissimi.* cf. Leo, *Ep.* 165.2, 17 August 458, Jaffé 542.

[36] as he did in the libel he sent to Leo, which anathematized Apollinaris. *Ep.* 21.3, December 448.

system from undergoing change, but also to avoiding the theological conundrum that would have resulted from the Apollinarians' way of ascribing human passions and mortality to a non-sentient, immortal God. He simply did not have the conceptual apparatus that he needed. Sensing this inadequacy, Leo said that theological problems were not to be solved by departing from some of the Apollinarian teachings, yet continuing to subscribe to others, especially the view that Christ had one Incarnate nature. Maintaining that Christ had a single nature, while denying that this nature was subject to change, merely implied that Christ had lived as a human being by a kind of deception and that the human body he assumed was only an imaginary form. By equating Eutyches' views with the single-nature christology of Apollinaris, Leo made him subscribe to a docetism that rivaled the Manichaeans'.[37]

The extent of Eutyches' christological error was further defined in juxtaposition to the opposing error on the heretical continuum, that of Nestorius of Constantinople, who, like Photinus (d. 376) and Paul of Samosata (d. 275), was said to confess that the Virgin bore Christ only as a man ('solus homo').[38] Leo was not the first to raise such an allegation against him. Socrates, in his *Historia Ecclesiastica*, noted that many believed Nestorius to have followed the teachings of Photinus, although Socrates himself considered the charge unfounded.[39] More complex than such rumors suggested, Nestorius' christology joined the human and divine natures of Christ in 'synapheia' ('connection'), a concept he used to express the unity of person.[40] Zealous to safeguard the divinity of Christ, he feared that "the hypostasis of the God Logos [might be] confused with the changeableness of the fleshly [hypostasis]."[41] That is why he followed his native school of Antioch in assigning the sayings of Christ in Scripture either to the human nature or to the divine. Although his critics thought that this method of christological exegesis promoted a doctrine of two Christs and two sons, Nestorius himself

[37] Leo, *Ep.* 59.1, 59.5, 22 February 450, *Licet de his*, quae, Jaffé 447; *Ep.* 165.2, 17 August 458, Jaffé 542.

[38] Leo, *Ep.* 31.1, 13 June 449, *Quantum praesidii*, Jaffé 425.

[39] Eusebius of Dorylaeum made the charges publicly in a decree (Spring 429). *Contestatio Publice Proposita, Eusebii Dorylaei*, (*CPG* 5940, [8620]), *ACO* I, I, I, pp. 101–102. Socrates thought that Nestorius followed neither Paul of Samosata nor Photinus. Socrates, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, 7.32. *GCS* N.F. 1, pp. 380–382.

[40] Grillmeier, op. cit., p. 459. On the unity of person in Nestorius, see L.I. Scipioni, *Nestorio e il concilio di Efeso. Storia dogma critica. Studia Patristica Mediolanensia*, 1 (Milan, 1974), pp. 386–392.

[41] Severus of Antioch, *Ctr. Gramm.*, 2.32, cited by Grillmeier, op. cit., p. 459.

was determined to preserve the unity of subject in Christ.[42] Portraying him otherwise, however, completed the heretical antithesis between Nestorius' christology, on the one hand, and Eutyches', on the other, by subtly distorting the teachings of each. Nestorius' doctrine of two distinct hypostases denied that Christ was divine. Eutyches' ascribing the conception, birth, life, and death of Christ only to the divinity improperly denied that all these stages were the property of Christ's human flesh.[43] The implication was that each had misinterpreted Scripture in his own way, Nestorius being confounded by the sayings that narrated the human acts of Jesus, and Eutyches by those describing his conception as divine. (Every heretical conception of Christ was described as the result of one or the other mistake: either it assigned to Christ only his human nature or only his divine.)[44] The theological statement that emerged from this antithesis was that salvation would be compromised if the Incarnation did not truly relate Christ both to the divinity and to the humanity by making him share fully in human flesh.[45]

Eutyches' colleague, Dioscorus, who had succeeded Cyril of Alexandria as the patriarch of that city, was similarly accused of having reduced the humanity of Christ to an illusion.[46] The human experiences of Christ that Scripture recorded were attributed by Dioscorus

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[42] See e.g., *Gesta Ephesina. Actio I. ACO* I, I, 2, p. 48, ll. 7–9, where Nestorius attempts to construct a unified person in Christ and explicitly denies the possibility of division.

[43] He implied that catholic doctrine was distilled from what each of them lacked. Leo, *Ep.* 165.2, 17 August 458, Jaffé 542. See also his *Ep.* 31.1, 13 June 449, Jaffé 425.

[44] Leo, *Serm.* 28.4, 25 December 452.

[45] Leo, *Ep.* 164.3, 17 August 458, *Multis manifestisque*, Jaffé 541. Because Eutyches denied that the body of Jesus came from Mary, he seemed to Leo to imitate the heresy committed by Origen, who taught that souls had not only a life but also different actions before being inserted into the bodies of human beings. This view of Origen was generally accurate. On Origen's doctrine of the preexistence of souls, see e.g., his *Contra Celsum*, 1.32. See also Leo, *Ep.* 102.3, 27 January 452, *Optassemus quidem*, Jaffé 479. 'unum Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum et falsum hominem et Deum diceret esse passibilem'. "[Eutyches] said that our one Lord Jesus Christ was both a false man and a passible God" Of the docetists, such as the Valentinians, he said: 'putauerunt Dominum Iesum non nostrae substantiae corpus habuisse, sed ab elementis superioribus ac subtilioribus sumptum.' "Some have thought that the Lord Jesus did not have a body [composed] of our substance, but [one that was] taken from the higher and finer elements." Leo, *Serm.* 28.4, 25 December 452.

[46] Dioscorus, of course, would have described his views differently. He, like many of those who advocated a single nature in Christ, was interested in protecting the Godhead from suffering. See esp. his *Epistula ad Domnum Antiochenum*, in J. Flemming, *Akten der Ephesinischen Synode vom Jahre 449. Syrisch mit Georg Hoffmans deutscher Übersetzung und seinen Anmerkungen, Abhandlungen der Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen*, N.F. 15, 1 (Gottingen, 1917), pp. 132–139, 140–143.

to an essence that was co-eternal and consubstantial with the Father. A devoted follower of Cyril's early christological language and a zealous opponent of Nestorianism, he continued to subscribe to the single-nature Christ even as objections were mounting against him. His variety of docetism was the result of a stubborn commitment to a Cyrillian fundamentalism that in its zeal to preserve Cyril's one-nature language permitted the deity to suffer, "as if the nature of divinity could have been pierced on the wood of the Cross, or the unchangeable could grow incrementally and eternal wisdom progress in wisdom, or God, who is Spirit, could thereupon be filled with the Spirit."[47] Leo had reason to be wary. The Arians had adduced similar evidence to support their view that Christ was unlike God when they said that divinity should not be attributed to one whose human life and suffering made him similar to an ordinary man.

The Arianism, real or imagined, to which Augustine and the other Latin theologians responded in the late fourth and early fifth centuries shaped Leo's opposition to Eutyches and Dioscorus. It is not possible here to lay out the historical trajectory of the Nicene controversy, but only to highlight a few of the anti-Arian influences that shaped Leo's christological views.[48] Because he did not confront Arians directly, it is worth considering the various constructions of the heresy that he inherited from his predecessors, and from whose polemical statements he arrived at his own impression.

Augustine confronted a variety of Arianism known as the 'homoean', which was current among the Goths who entered Italy and Africa and then converted to Christianity.[49] They subordinated Christ to a transcendent God who was distinguished from Christ in possessing the attributes of His wisdom and perfection as an intrinsic part of who He was. His attributes were not derived from something else in the way that these same attributes in Christ were derived from him.[50] The

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[47] Leo, *Ep.* 120.3, 11 June 453, *Remeantibus ad nos*, Jaffé 496. cf. Leo, *Serm.* 30.2, 25 December 454.

[48] Ayres' has recently shown that the Nicene controversy arose out of "tensions among existing theological trajectories" and should not be reduced to one "temporal point of departure." See L. Ayres, *Nicaea and its Legacy: An Approach to Fourth-Century Trinitarian Theology* (Oxford, 2004).

[49] of whom Wulfila, a Goth who converted to Arian Christianity, was a prime example.

[50] Augustine, *Collatio Augustini cum Maximo Arianorum episcopo* 13, 14, 23, PL 42, 729–732, 738. God is the cause of all, ibid. 5, 7, PL 42, 726; *Sermonum Arianorum Fragmenta Antiquissima* 4, PL 13, 604. These Arians were especially drawn to the passages in the

radical subordinationism that these Arians embraced was confirmed by the impression Augustine formed of them when a catechetical work of theirs came to his attention in 418. It left no room for doubt that the relationship that they construed among the three persons of the Trinity was not coequal as Nicene orthodoxy assumed, but rigidly hierarchical insofar as the Father was different in his nature, power, and substance from the other two members of the Trinity, and the Holy Spirit was fully subordinate to the Son:[51] "The Son [is] a witness of the Father and the Spirit a witness of the Son. The Son is sent by the Father and the Spirit is sent by the Son. The Son is a servant of the Father and the Spirit is a servant of the Son. The Son is ordered by the Father and the Holy Spirit is ordered by the Son. The Son is subordinate to the Father and the Holy Spirit is subordinate to the Son. The Son adores and honors the Father and the Holy Spirit adores and honors the Son."[52] Paradoxically, this hierarchical view led such 'homoeans' as Palladius of Ratiaria and Maximinus to subscribe to the catholic doctrine that acknowledged three distinct persons in the Trinity. But it also led them to accuse the Nicenes of Sabellianism, presumably for failing to distinguish sufficiently the members of the Trinity who shared the same nature.[53]

From the polemical writings of Ambrose and Epiphanius that were directed against them it is possible to reconstruct the scriptural texts that were used among some of their representatives, which included passages indicating the ignorance of Jesus; his agony in the garden; and his praying to the Father in order to prove that Christ was inferior to the Father, that the Logos was limited in its power,[54] and that the Son, who was chosen and called by grace, was a creature produced from the

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Gospel of John that spoke of Christ's obedience to the will of the Father, as is clear from the *Sermo arianorum*, PL 42, 677–684. See Quasten, iv, p. 109. For a concordance and index of Arian *scolia*, see R. Gryson, *Débat de Maximinus avec Augustin. Scolies ariennes sur le concile d'Aquilée* (Louvain, 1980).

[51] *Sermonum Arianorum Fragmenta Antiquissima*, 4, PL 13, 604; ibid., 6, PL 13, 609.

[52] *Sermo arianorum*, PL 42, 680. See Augustine, *Con. serm. ar.*, PL 42, 683–708, in which he responds to the Arian text, which some manuscripts preserve. Quasten, iv, p. 106.

[53] See e.g., Maximinus, *Dissertatio Maximini contra Ambrosium*, 128–135, PLS 1, 724–726. See Quasten, vi, p. 112. For a discussion of the charge of Sabellianism made by the Arians against the Nicenes, see R.P.C. Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God. The Arian Controversy 318–381* (Edinburgh, 1988), pp. 575–576. They were also charged with Tritheism.

[54] Maximinus, *Dissertatio Maximini contra Ambrosium*, 104–105, PLS 1, 718. On Jesus' ignorance, see Epiphanius, *Panarion* 69.43.1–2. On his agony in the garden, see ibid.

will of the Father.[55] In subordinating Christ to the Godhead, the Arians meant to distinguish the divinity of Christ, who experienced human suffering and death, from the transcendent and impassive divinity that was God. They thought that redemption was possible only if the divinity in which Christ suffered was composed of a substance and nature different from the Godhead.[56]

This moderate variety of Arianism can be distinguished from another more radical type that flourished in the West during the early fifth century, 'anomoean' Arianism, which the Cappadocians, Gregory Nazianzen, Gregory of Nyssa, and Basil of Caesarea defeated in the century before.[57] Also known as neo-Arianism (for its commitment to the heresy's founder), this was the variety to which Philostorgius (d. c. 433), Aetius (d. 454), and Eunomius (d. c. 393) subscribed. Convinced that knowledge of God was accessible not only to the Word but to human beings, the 'anomoeans' made "a careful use of Greek philosophical terms, of Aristotelian logic and late Platonic philosophy."[58] Of their Aristotelian method of argumentation Ambrose wrote, "For in this dialectics, if what they ask to be conceded is not conceded, by which they wish to discover an opening for an argument, then they cannot find a beginning for what is to be disputed."[59] Although the Latin thinkers were mainly troubled by the more ancient version of Arianism, the 'homoean' variety that Augustine confronted, some, such as Ambrose, were also troubled by this dialectical type, which was

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69.60.1 and 69.59.1. On his praying to the Father, see ibid. 69.29.1 and 69.60.1–2. See Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God*, p. 562.

[55] *Epistula de fide, vita et obitu Ulfilae*, 46–51, PLS 1, 704–705, in Maximinus, *Dissertatio Maximini contra Ambrosium*.

[56] See e.g., *Opus imperfectum in Matthaeum*, *Hom.* 28, PG 56, 777. "Why then did he cry on the Cross 'My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?' if the body had not been abandoned?" "The Son cried to the Father so that he could learn from the infirmity of the body how to suffer like men, not that he might show the body to have been abandoned by the divinity." Arians such as these wished to show that the divinity participated in the suffering on the Cross. See e.g., ibid., PG 56, 889, "If indeed a pure man [i.e., like us] suffered, I dismiss [it]: because [then] the death of a man saved us, not [the death] of God." ('Si enim homo purus est passus, dimitto: quia nos mors hominis, non Dei salvavit.')

[57] i.e., at the Council of Constantinople 381.

[58] Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God*, p. 557. They preferred to use the term 'ingenerateness' for Christ because they were unwilling to assert that the Son was begotten rather than created.

[59] Ambrose, *De incarn. dom.*, 89. For a discussion of Ambrose's sources, see ed. O. Faller, *Sancti Ambrosii Opera*, 8, CSEL 79 (Vienna, 1964), Prolegomena, pp. 48–49.

prevalent in the East. His treatise, *De incarnationis dominiciae sacramento*, edited in 382, suggests that he developed his christology to respond to this philosophically sophisticated form of Arianism that he encountered through reading the *Adversus Eunomium* of Basil.[60] Though not the observations of a disinterested observer, Ambrose's perceptions of them are useful because it was from reading him that Leo formulated his impression of the heresy, to which his christology responded.

These were the Arians whom Ambrose perceived as distorting the creed of the Council of Nicaea, which said that the Father was unbegotten and the Son begotten, to serve their theological ends. If the Son were begotten, they reasoned, then he must have been less than the Father in dignity and power, different from him in nature and substance,[61] and caused by Him who was uncreated and beyond all cause ('aitia'). (To designate this Arian concept Ambrose used the Greek word 'aitia', which suggests that here was indeed an eastern variety of Arianism.) Because 'caused substances' differed from 'uncaused', the Arians concluded that unbegotten substances similarly differed from begotten. To challenge the ruthless logic behind such claims, Ambrose proposed that the word 'begotten' expressed not a property of nature or of substance, but a signification, a way of describing generation. The same Aristotelian methods that the Arians used were, therefore, used by Ambrose to distinguish between the philosophical categories of substance and quality. Because designations such as 'unbegotten' and 'begotten' described *how* God is, namely the quality that the Father was not generated from another, but not *what* God is, not his substance, then the substance might be the same, even while the quality differed. To illustrate the point, Ambrose used an analogy: all fowls share of the same 'genus' and, therefore, the same nature, but there are three species of them and the causes of their origin are different.[62]

This variety of Arianism that Ambrose described polemically shared with its less philosophically sophisticated colleagues in the West a tendency to attribute the frailties of Jesus' human body, the weakness of human pain and suffering, to the single divine nature.[63] To rehabili-

[60] For Ambrose's pro-Nicene theological contributions, see Ayres, *Nicaea and its Legacy*, pp. 260–267.

[61] Ambrose, *De incarn. dom.*, 95.

[62] Ambrose, *De incarn. dom.*, 100, 102.

[63] Ambrose, *De incarn. dom.*, 41. "Why do you attribute the afflictions of the body and the weakness of human pain to the divinity, and connect them to the divine nature?" Ambrose asked. ('Cur divinitati attributis aerumnas corporis et infirmum

tate the divinity of Christ from being downgraded within this hierarchical scheme and to safeguard it from the ravages of human suffering, Ambrose turned to the Latin version of a Psalm of David: "[He is like] the bridegroom, leaving his bride-chamber, who rejoiced as a giant to run his way (*Ps.* 18.6)." From his typological reading of the passage, which made the eternal Word the equivalent to 'the bridegroom' of the soul, a new portrait of Christ emerged as a giant of the earth, the two-bodied beast, who is double in form and twin in nature, a being both divine and corporeal.[64] To defeat the Arians, Ambrose filtered this classical image of the composite ('gemini') giant through the paradox of a composite human-deity: "The same one suffered and did not suffer; died and did not die; was buried and was not buried; rose again and did not rise again."[65] The suffering, human Christ was not inferior to the impassive Godhead, because Christ suffered only in the body that he assumed and "he did not die in the substance of eternal life."[66] The image of the two-bodied giant allowed Ambrose to construe the divinity of the Word as a separate nature that was free from human pain.

Leo formulated his christology to respond to the Arianism that he absorbed from reading Augustine, Ambrose, and John Cassian, none of whom reproduced the nuances of the heresy precisely. That all three authors developed their christological thought in relationship to an Arianism that they polemically represented accounts for the unwieldy quality of much of the christological thought of the period. Augustine, for instance, understood the human and divine natures of Christ as a personal unity, especially after he challenged the Arians who, like the Pelagians, thought that the unity of natures in Christ was effected by God's goodwill alone. This way of construing the union allowed him to counter the already-familiar charge that the Arians had made against the theology of the Council of Nicaea—that the statements in Scripture ascribing suffering to Christ made him inferior to the

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doloris humani et divinae connectis naturae?') (I have removed the comma after 'corporis'.)

[64] Ambrose, *De incarn. dom.*, 35 ('biformis geminaeque naturae unus sit consors divinitatis et corporis.' lit: "There exists a union of divinity and body of a nature double in form and twin.") See B.E. Daley, "The Giant's Twin Substances: Ambrose and the Christology of Augustine's *Contra Sermonem Arianorum*," *Collectanea Augustiniana* (1993), p. 481 and n. 37 for classical references to the composite giant, part human, part beast.

[65] Ambrose, *De incarn. dom.*,36.

[66] Ambrose, *De incarn. dom.*, 37 ('non moriebatur secundum aeternae substantiam vitae').

Father. By undermining the paradox of Jesus' human life, the Arians resolved the contradictory passages in Scripture that said that the Son of man descended from heaven even while he came from the Virgin Mary.[67] The person of Jesus who suffered as a man could not be equal in stature to the Godhead, they argued, because the experience of suffering was inconsistent with the impassive quality of divinity. Augustine explained this contradiction by clarifying what he meant by 'a unity of person', using some of the same words and deploying some of the same arguments that Ambrose had used against Arianism. One reason for the similarity was that Augustine was familiar with, and, therefore, borrowed freely from, the *De incarnationis sacramento* and *De fide* of Ambrose.[68] Another was that both of them apparently confronted a similar variety of Arianism and may have independently reached similar conclusions as to how best to respond to it. Daley has shown that "[t]he Arians Augustine criticized in Africa, in 419 and afterwards, were the successors of the same Latin-speaking *homoeans* Ambrose had opposed at Sirmium and Aquileia and Rome in the years between 375 and 382, and against whom he directed his earlier polemical tracts."[69] While Ambrose encountered the dialectical and philosophical branch of Arianism, known as the 'anomoean' variety, either directly or, more likely, indirectly through his familiarity with the anti-Eunomian treatises of the Cappadocians, both types of Arianism influenced his christology.

Augustine's confrontation with Arianism in 411–414 (when he wrote his *Tractatus in evangelium Ioannis*) similarly affected the way in which he formulated his christology.[70] Prior to that time (mid-390's), the distinguishing feature of his christological thought was its emphasis on the divinity of Christ. It was a Word-centered christology that was a remnant perhaps from his days as a Manichaean. Only in later years,

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[67] Augustine, *Con. serm. ar.*, 8, PL 42, 688. Leo knew this work of Augustine and alluded to it in his *Tome*. Compare Leo, *Ep.* 28.5 and Augustine, *Con. serm. ar.*, 8.6, PL 42, 688.37–51, for example.

[68] For more discussion, see below. Daley, "The Giant's Twin Substances …," p. 486, suggests that Augustine had both treatises in mind when he responded (in his *Con. serm. ar.*) to the Arian catechetical work that was sent to him in 419.

[69] Ibid. See also B. Studer, "Una Persona in Christo. Ein augustinisches Thema bei Leo dem Grossen," *Augustinianum* 25 (1985), p. 486.

[70] The date of the first group of sermons in the *Tractatus* (1–54) is variously assigned by scholars to the years 411–414, or even after 418 for sermons 17–54. See Quasten, iv, p. 395. Augustine's exegesis of Jn. 5:19 in sermons 18 and 20 responds to the Trinitarian concerns raised by Arianism. See Daley, "The Giant's Twin Substances …," p. 487, n. 58.

as Daley has remarked, did he distinguish, metaphysically, the human experience and reality of Christ from the divine, and understand them both to be connected through the subjective unity of his person.[71] The Christ of such later works as his *Contra sermonem arianorum* (*c.* 419) had two complete natures that were joined ontologically to form a unified person. To describe the developing christology that was the progress of his anti-Arian thought, Augustine used theological words that he borrowed from Ambrose's *De incarnationis sacramento*, the 'gemina substantia'. This symmetrical image was aptly chosen to crystallize each of the two natures, the twin substances, in its distinctive reality. That the natures were symmetrical did not imply, however, that they were merely two aspects of the same person, because each of them was animated by its particular will.[72] They were ontologically distinct entities endowed with the qualities needed to express their particular uniqueness. The natures were so fully coordinated according to this theological scheme that the properties of the one nature were fully expressed in the other:

> [T]his unity of the person of our Lord Jesus Christ is so constant for each nature, namely the divine and the human, that it imparts the designation for any of these [natures] also to the other, the divine to the human and the human to the divine … Therefore that divinity receives the name of this humanity, and this humanity receives the name of that divinity. The selfsame Christ appears, nevertheless, as a giant with a twin substance, according to which he is obedient to, and according to which he is equal to God; according to which he is Son of Man and according to which he is Son of God.[73]

This personal unity, which he expressed by the 'communicatio idiomatum', was the christological model that accounted for the passages in Scripture in which the Son of man experienced human suffering, and the human being performed divine miracles. It was also the model that influenced Leo.

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[71] Ibid.

[72] In many ways, Augustine's thought here foreshadows what would later be decided at the Council of Constantinople III in 680/1 in order to resolve the Monothelete controversy. Not until Sophronios, the aging bishop of Jerusalem who argued for dyotheletism, would the quality of the wills in Christ be fully explored. See Sophronios, *Epistula Sophronii Hierosolymitani*, ACO Ser. II.II.I, pp. 444.21–446.12. Leo, too, "shapes a clear dyothelitic formula long before the Monothelite dispute." Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. 1. p. 535, citing Leo. *Serm.* 56.2, 28 March 443.

[73] Augustine, *Con. serm. ar.*, 8, PL 42, 688–689. The phrase he uses is 'geminae gigas substantiae'. Daley, "The Giant's Twin Substances …," p. 487.

The model Augustine used to elucidate the relationship between the two natures that operated distinctly was derived from Trinitarian theology. The Arians had distorted his views when they accused him, for his support of Nicaea, of subscribing to the heresy of Sabellius, in which the Son was considered to be the same person as the Father. Reestablishing the same orthodox creed that the Arians had rejected, Augustine said that the Father and the Son were two distinct persons who shared the same nature; they were not the same person as Sabellius claimed. Two levels of distinction were needed in order to respond to the Arians' charges: first, among the persons of the Trinity, and second, between the natures of Christ. The former distinction responded to the charge that Augustine was a Sabellian, while the latter addressed the Arians' contention that the Son was inferior to the Father. It was only in the christological relationship between the two natures, and not in the different substances of the Father as 'begetter' and the Son as 'begotten', that the Father was greater than the Son.[74] That Christ the Word shared the same nature as the Father, but differed in his person, was another way of saying that Christ was equal to, but separate from, the Father. This Word-centered christology that shaped Augustine's earlier works continued to influence his theological disputes with the Arians.

Avoiding the Trinitarian concerns that had occupied Augustine, Leo integrated the image of the 'twin substances' ('gemina substantia') that he had acquired from reading Augustine and Ambrose. To defeat the Arians' plan to establish that the human experiences of Jesus recorded in the gospels made him subject to the vicissitudes of physical change, we have already seen how sharply Leo distinguished between the natures of Christ "to which the humility of his weakness comes forth from those to which the height of his power descends."[75] Committed to fleshing out every characteristic of the humanity in Christ, Leo explored ontologically how to maintain the divinity of Christ in its full equality with the Father, without compromising the integrity of his human nature.

Both Leo's predecessors, therefore, influenced his understanding of Christ, simultaneously and paradoxically, as true man and true God.

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[74] Augustine, *Con. serm. ar.*, 34.

[75] Leo, *Ep.* 124.5, 15 June 453, Jaffé 450, and *Ep.* 165.6, 17 August 458, Jaffé 542, where he is especially interested in understanding "the characteristics of the acts themselves" ('ipsorum operum qualitates'). He repeats this in *Ep.* 124.6.

Because of the controversy with the Apollinarians in the fourth century, who had insisted controversially that Christ had one nature, the tradition that Christ, in fact, had two was put in place well before Augustine, and finally solidified after the Nicenes defeated Arianism.[76] Augustine even spoke of a canonical rule of the catholic faith that he and the other Latin theologians used to distinguish the true man in Christ from the true God:

> Whatever you have heard ascribed in a lowly manner to the Lord Jesus Christ, think of the dispensation of the assumed flesh, … but whatever you hear or read in the gospels that ascribes to him what is sublime and high above all creatures, and divine, and equal and coeternal with the Father, be sure that you read this such that it pertains to the form of God, not to the form of a servant. For if you maintain this rule ('regula'), you who are able to understand it (and not all of you will be able to understand it, but all of you should trust in it), if then you maintain this rule, then you will fight steadfast against the slanders of heretical darkness, as if you were walking in the light.[77]

The quality of Christ's actions was the intuitive benchmark he used for distinguishing among the various sayings in Scripture.

As reasonable as this method seems for differentiating the human nature from the divine, Augustine implemented the rule differently from Ambrose and Leo, because he understood the humanity of Christ differently. He thought it incapable, in some sense, of accepting the full divinity of the Godhead. That is why the passages from Scripture that made Christ inferior to the Father were, he thought, representative of a further Trinitarian distinction between the person of the Father and of the Son. They were not merely the manifestation of Christ's two distinct natures. The christological problem was thereby construed as an extension of the Trinitarian one, the practical result being that the divine actions of Christ were sometimes attributed to the eternal Word, the second person of the Trinity. Unlike Ambrose, whose response to the Arians resulted in a formal and well-differentiated distinction between Christ's two natures, Augustine envisaged a fluid one, in which such passages describing Jesus' miraculous actions as a human being were not necessarily assigned to his divine nature.

Leo applied the same canonical rule, but reached a different result. Seemingly contradictory passages from Scripture professing the Son to

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[76] T.J. Van Bavel, *Recherches sur la christologie de saint Augustin* (Freiburg, 1954), pp. 44, 103.

[77] Augustine, *Tract. in Ev. Io.*, 36.2. See Van Bavel, *Recherches*, p. 103.

be, at one time, less than and, at other times, equal to the Father were not to be understood by grappling with the hierarchical relationship between the Father and Son. The Arian problem was to be addressed by clarifying the earthly and coequal relationship of the divine and human natures in the person of Christ, thereby separating the Trinitarian context from the christological one. "Who was the person of Christ?" was the question that Leo posed. He was at once eternal from the Father and temporal from the Virgin. He was inviolable in his strength and capable of suffering ('passibilis') in his human weakness.[78] Dissimilarity ('inparilitas') marked his human form, equality ('aequitas') his divine.[79] His humble actions clearly differed from his divine.[80] These visible actions of Christ, rather than his heavenly relationships, distinguished the divine and human natures in a christological system that was poised to defeat the Arians. Maintaining the complete reality of the divine and human natures was essential to this way of thinking, for "Without the power of the Word there would not have been the healing of the sick and the raising of the dead; and without the reality of the flesh he would not have been hungry and in need of food nor tired and in need of rest."[81] Each nature retained the qualities and characteristics that were appropriate to its full expression.[82]

Understanding how those qualities and characteristics related to one another was the problem that Leo fleshed out in his doctrine of the 'communicatio idiomatum': "Each form does indeed what is proper [to it] in communion with the other; the Word of course performs what is [proper] to the Word and the flesh carries out what is [proper] to the flesh."[83] The form of God did not overpower the servant, nor did the form of the servant diminish God;[84] the divine power and strength was

[78] Leo, *Ep.* 35.2, 13 June 449, Jaffé 429.

[79] Leo, Serm. 27.1, 25 December 451, *Festivitatis hodiernae, dilectissimi.*

[80] Leo, *Serm.* 56.2, 28 March 443, *Creator et Dominus omnium rerum Christus*; *Ep.* 124.5, 124.6, 15 June 453, Jaffé 450.

[81] Leo, *Ep.* 124.5, 15 June 453, Jaffé 450. 'Sine Verbi potentia non fieret redintegratio debilium, et vivificatio mortuorum: et sine veritate carnis, nec cibus jejuno, nec somnus esset necessarius fatigato.'

[82] i.e., "Each nature truly maintains its own property without any deficiency." 'Tenet enim sine defectu proprietatem suam utraque natura.' Leo, *Serm.* 23.2, 25 December 442. As Armitage put it, "Leo's Christ is *totus homo*, that is, he exists in perfect solidarity with the totality of human experience." idem, *A Twofold Solidarity*, p. 95.

[83] 'Agit enim utraque forma cum alterius communione, quod proprium est; Verbo scilicet operante quod Verbi est, et carne exsequente quod carnis est.' Leo, *Ep.* 28.4, 13 June 449, Jaffé 423. Cf. *Serm.* 54.2, 5 April 442, *Inter omnia, dilectissimi.*

[84] Leo, *Serm.* 23.2, 25 December 442; *Serm.* 27.1, 25 December 451.

not made idle through human weakness, nor was the human weakness overcome by strength.[85] Because the divine and human natures were so complete in their respective attributes, and so intertwined by the unity of their person, the implication was that the impassible divinity was paradoxically present in the humanity that suffered, and that each nature fully coexisted without causing the other to undergo change.[86] This intermingling of divine and human properties that maintained their respective realities was the 'sharing of attributes' that Leo, and before him Augustine, spoke of. It said that when the Son was united to the Father, the creature to its creator, the divine was present in what was assumed, and the human nature in the one who assumed it.[87] His was a new way of making the fullness of divinity present in the human actions of Christ and, therefore, in the lives of ordinary Christians.

It depended on the union between the divine and human natures of Christ having taken place at the level of the person. We have already seen how greatly this close, personal union departed from the Arians' view. "This unity … by which the creature is joined to the Creator, is what Arian blindness could not see with the eyes of understanding, which [i.e. blindness], not believing the only-begotten of God to have the same glory and substance as the Father, fabricated for itself a lesser divinity of the Son from [actions] that must be referred to the form of a servant."[88] They thought that the union between the Father and Son in the Trinity, and between the divinity and humanity of Christ at the Incarnation, was exclusively the result of the Father's goodwill, and that no ontological union had taken place through either the similarity of the natures or of the substances.[89] It was essential to Leo's christology, in contrast, that the same person had performed both the human and the divine actions, the fellowship ('consortium') between divine greatness and human lowliness being so pronounced in the person of Christ that the one and the same Christ remained after he assumed ('suscipere') the

[85] Leo, *Serm.* 62.2, 16 March 452, *Desiderata nobis, dilectissimi.*

[86] Leo, *Serm.* 23.1, 25 December 442. Here Leo states clearly that there was no distinction of persons.

[87] Leo, *Serm.* 63.1, 19 March 452, *Gloria, dilectissimi, dominicae passionis.*

[88] Leo, *Serm.* 23.2, 25 December 442. 'Hanc unitatem … qua Creatori creatura conseritur, intellegentiae oculis cernere caecitas arriana non potuit, quae Unigenitum Dei eiusdem cum Patre gloriae atque substantiae esse non credens, minorem sibi finxit Filii deitatem de his quae ad *formam* sunt referenda *servilem.*'

[89] See e.g., Hilary of Poitiers, *Contra Auxentium*, PL 10, 609–618, 612. The phrase he uses is 'per voluntatem Dei' or "through the will of God."

substance of a complete human form.[90] His doctrine of two complete natures that possessed every attribute of their respective realities did not produce the two Christs and two Sons that his critics feared.[91] In order to defeat the Arians, it was just as important for Leo to maintain the singularity of the person as it was to distinguish between the natures. That is why he insisted that the diversity of both natures came together "into such a great unity that there is one and the same Son who as true man says that he is inferior to the Father, and as true God professes that he is equal to the Father."[92] It prevented the Arians from referring the actions of the servant to a distinct and lesser God.

Leo compared this personal union in Christ to that of the body and soul in human beings.[93] In doing so, he judiciously repeated a popular metaphor that Tertullian, Ambrose, and Augustine had articulated before him.[94] John Cassian, in his treatise against Nestorius, argued that

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[90] 'suscipere' can also be translated here as 'to take or receive'. Leo, *Serm.* 23.1, 25 December 442. Leo, *Serm.* 63.1, 19 March 452.

[91] See e.g., his doctrine of the 'communicatio idiomatum', which sounded to the monks of Palestine like Nestorianism. Leo, *Ep.* 28.4, 13 June 449, Jaffé 423. As Grillmeier remarks, "the *communio* or *connexio* between the divine and the human activity is achieved through the unity of person." Idem, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. 1, p. 536. But the unity came about without the two substances having produced two separate persons. What Leo does not make clear, according to Grillmeier, is what each of the substances forfeited in order to bring about this unity. idem, p. 537. It was probably due to the editing of Prosper that the word 'substantia' was avoided in the *Tome* as a term describing Christ's human nature. idem, p. 538.

[92] Leo, *Serm.* 23.1, 25 December 442; see also *Ep.* 124.6, 15 June 453, Jaffé 450, where Leo insists that the actions of both natures were done inseparably by one person.

[93] Van Bavel, *Recherches*, p. 30, remarks that the comparison was not found before 400. It appears in a sermon of Augustine *c.* 402–404. See *Serm.* 237.2, ed. S. Poque, SC 116 (1966), pp. 280–292 (Jesus' humanity is composed of a human soul and a human body. Human beings are what they are because they are composed of a soul united to a body; Jesus is the Christ because he is at the same time God and man.). See also, *Ep.* 140.12 (just as the union of the soul and the flesh do not double the number of the person and constitute one human being, so the union of man to the Word does not destroy the unity of Jesus Christ and constitutes only one single and same Christ), *Serm.* 186.1 (just as human beings are composed of a body and soul, so also is Jesus Christ at the same time God and man), and *Ep.* 238.29 (the soul and body form a single living being ('animal'), a single person, a single human being). Cyril of Alexandria later used the same analogy in his letter to the monks of Egypt, written in *c.* 429. *Epistula Cyrilli Alexandrini ad monachos*. ACO I, I, I, p. 15. For a criticism of this analogy, see G. O'Collins, *Christology. A Biblical, Historical, and Systematic Study of Jesus Christ* (Oxford, 1995), p. 185.

[94] See, e.g., Augustine, *Serm.* 214.7, ed. G. Morin, *Revue bénédictine* 72 (1962), pp. 14–21, which attributes Jesus' sadness upon dying to the complete person of Christ, meaning the Word and the man, but says that he was crucified as man alone. *De Trinitate*, 4.20, PL 42, 819–1098, speaks of man and divinity united in one person. *Serm.* 214.6 says that

the union of the humanity and divinity in Christ was similar to the union between man and woman, and between Christ and the church.[95] This union took place, according to Leo and his predecessors, in the Virgin's womb; there was never a time when God was without the human being, or when the human being was without God;[96] nor was there a time when the Word existed as a separate person. To clarify that it was the Word that assumed the human nature, and not the human nature that assumed the Word, Nestorius was criticized for saying that the Virgin conceived a man without the Godhead, which the Word then assumed.[97] The orthodox agreed that this statement was heretical. What distinguished Leo from his predecessors was that the personal union he construed between the two natures fastidiously maintained the properties and attributes belonging to each.[98]

3. *The quality of Christ's humanity*

Leo's prior experience with those he deemed heretics shaped his understanding of the type of human being that Christ had become. Relevant here once again was the fierce campaign he had waged against the Manichaeans for having denied that Christ's human flesh was real. We have already seen that he refuted their docetism by gathering passages from Scripture to prove that a real human body suffered pain, was

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the Word is united to a complete human being, to a rational soul and to a body, so that the one Christ, who is also one God, is not only the Word but the Word and the man; he is both the Son of God through the nature of the Word, and the Son of man through the human nature.

[95] John Cassian, *De Incarn.Chr.*, 5.11. See also ibid., 4.5, 4.6.

[96] Leo, *Serm.* 54.1, 5 April 442.

[97] Leo, *Ep.* 59.5, 22 February 450, Jaffé 447. Leo said that Christ's human nature was not assumed in such a way that it was first created and then assumed. Leo, *Ep.* 35.3, 13 June 449, Jaffé 429. For the same formula, see also Augustine, *Con. serm. ar.* 8. Leo avoided the Antiochene formula 'homo assumptus' that might have sounded like Nestorianism. (But cf. *Serm* 28.2, 25 December 452) On his later use of the formula to express the full humanity of Christ, see, P.L. Barclift, "The Shifting Tones of Pope Leo the Great's Christological Vocabulary," *Church History* 2 (1997), pp. 221–239. It was especially after his confrontation with the Monophysite monks of Palestine and Egypt that he used the formula in order to defeat their docetism. Ibid., pp. 234–235.

[98] See e.g., Leo, *Serm.* 54.1, 5 April 442: "Each nature expresses its own truth, to be sure, through [its] distinct actions, but neither separates itself from [its] connection with the other." 'Exprimit quidem sub distinctis actionibus veritatem suam utraque natura, sed neutra se ab alterius conexione disiungit.'

nailed to the Cross, lay in the tomb, and rose from the dead.[99] Against the Apollinarians he said that the Word, which assumed a complete human body, was fully endowed with a rational soul and mind. The full humanity of Christ's body and mind were made apparent especially among the holy sites of Jerusalem, where the stages in the life of Christ were represented physically for everyone to see. "Your home is Bethlehem, where the saving womb of the Virgin from the house of David shone forth, whom, wrapped in swaddling clothes, the manger of an inn received due to lack of space … Your home is where his boyhood grew up, where his youth matured, and where, through bodily increments, the nature of true man developed into complete manhood ('perfectus vir'), not without food for hunger, not without sleep for rest, not without tears of pity ('miseratio'), nor without fear when frightened."[100] That Christ was fully human meant not only that he suffered, but that his senses and emotions were comparable to those of an ordinary human being.

What distinguished the quality of his personhood from the rest of humanity was his freedom from original and acquired sin. Like the Latin theologians before him, Leo believed that Christ was not subject to the typical human temptations that were the basis for committing transgressions.[101] Because his mind was guided by the Godhead, he assumed his mother's nature without her sinfulness ('culpa').[102] Leo's original contribution was to show that being free from sin did not limit the range of human emotions. That Christ experienced such human afflictions as hunger, thirst, sleep, weariness, sadness, and tears confirmed that human beings, before the Fall, had been emotional creatures. Christ received the full complement of this feeling humanity by taking on its multifaceted nature, thereby connecting his human nature to ordinary people.[103] The reality and depth of that connection enabled them not only to recognize their own life experiences in the emotional life of Christ, but to accept those experiences as an integral part of who they were.[104]

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[99] Leo, *Ep.* 124.6, 15 June 453, Jaffé 450.

[100] Here Leo writes to Juvenal, bishop of Jerusalem. Leo, *Ep.* 139.2, 4 September 454, *Acceptis dilectionis tuae*, Jaffé 514.

[101] Leo, *Ep.* 35.3, 13 June 449, Jaffé 429.

[102] Leo, *Ep.* 28.4, 13 June 449, Jaffé 423.

[103] The nature of every human being was, therefore, one with Christ. Leo, *Serm.* 66.4, 10 April 453, *Evangelica lectio, dilectissimi.*

[104] Leo, *Serm.* 66.4, 10 April 453.

In fully exploring the qualities and characteristics that were Christ's human nature, Leo borrowed partly from Augustine, to whom it is not really proper to attribute a christology of the Logos after the mid-390s.[105] He, too, paid close attention to the role that Christ's human nature played in facilitating redemption. Differences remain, nonetheless. Augustine believed that the acts pertaining to the human nature of Christ were governed mainly by the Word: "If the God-man is sad, it is because the Word wants him to be sad, and permits his sadness."[106] The Christ that Augustine envisioned performed his divine miracles by means of his body and flesh, but not *through* his body and flesh. His human actions were, therefore, mainly the outward manifestation of divinity guiding the body from within.[107] That is why he spoke of a power of divinity that was present in Christ's visible flesh. Leo, in contrast, believed that the emotions of Christ were chiefly the function of a human nature that was not overshadowed by the Word. They were, rather, the unpredictable and open-ended experiences of a real human being.

For Augustine, the human nature of Christ represented all humanity ('humanitas') as a kind of mystical body that was the hypostatic union of Christ and his church.[108] Van Bavel has even suggested that a true 'communicatio idiomatum' existed between them, so that the attributes of the one were present in the other. Support for this view can be found in Augustine's *De doctrina Christiana*, where he located the principle of the union in the first of seven exegetical rules set forth by Tychonius, a Donatist bishop who later wrote against the sect.[109] Following all his rules, Tychonius said, was the key to unlocking the obscure passages

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[105] See e.g., Van Bavel, *Recherches*, p. 64, who says that Augustine's "attention se porte déjà beaucoup plus sur la grandeur et le rôle de la nature humaine du Christ."

[106] according to Van Bavel, ibid., also p. 65. See e.g., Augustine, *En. in ps.* 56.16, where he says that the flesh of Christ "operates the divine acts, including the miracles and the Passion."

[107] which Augustine thought was accomplished "by that interior divinity acting through the exterior flesh, by the immortal power in a mortal fashion." ('ab illa interiore divinitate per exteriorem carnem virtute immortali mortaliter.') Augustine, *En. in ps.*, 117.6; see also idem, *Tract. in Ev. Io.*, 27.5 ("All the actions [of Christ] are the actions of the flesh, but of the flesh that acts as an instrument of the Spirit.")

[108] See e.g., Augustine, *Serm.* 45.5 (the church is the body of Jesus Christ and the head is the one born of the Virgin Mary).

[109] For the *Liber de septem regulis* (c. 392) of Tychonius, see PL 18, 15–66, esp. rule 1, 15–19. For Augustine's discussion of the rules, see his *De doctrina Christiana*, 3.92 (42)—135 (56), ed. G.M. Green, *De doctrina Christiana, libri quattuor*, CSEL 80 (1963), esp. rule 1, ibid. 98 (44)—99 (44). See also Van Bavel, *Recherches*, p. 111.

in Scripture. The problem was to distinguish those passages referring to Christ, the head, (meaning, the church) from those referring to his body (meaning, the one born from Mary), even when the subject used to describe them was the same. The solution, as Augustine saw it, was to attribute actions that were inconsistent with the Christ-head, such as sin, to the Christ-body.[110] That this mystical body consisted in the head and the body that together formed the one Christ did not mean, however, that he was incomplete without the mystical body. He who was already whole ('integer') was said to be combined further to form one, single whole ('integer') with humanity.[111] By forging this union between the ontological entities that were Christ and his church, Augustine conceived of a Christ that was complete as the Word, as the Son of God, and as a human being.

Preserving the unity of the mystical Christ was essential to Augustine's christology, which never perceived Christ, the head, and Christ, the body, as two distinct persons merely bound together in one flesh.[112] He rather understood Christ to speak as a unique and singular being, for whom Christians were to determine on whose behalf Christ was speaking, whether for his own human nature, or for the wide spectrum of humanity that was the mystical body.[113] "How," asked Augustine, "are we [members of] his body and how is he one Christ with us? Where do we find that one Christ is head and body, that is to say, the body [united] to its head? Isaiah speaks of [the marriage of] husband and wife in the singular: certainly one and the same is spoken of."[114] The singular person that was Christ and the church made it possible for Augustine to conceive of humanity as having forged a true connection with Christ through his human nature. He never imagined such an intimate relationship that there was no distinction between

[110] Augustine, *En. in ps.*, 58.2.

[111] Augustine, *Serm.* 341.(9).11.

[112] But see Augustine, *De Genesi contra Manichaeos*, 2.(24).57, PL 34, 173–220, in which he alludes to Christ and the Church as two in one flesh, the prophetic fulfillment of the words of Genesis on the marriage of a man and woman. See also *Eph.* 5.30–32.

[113] Augustine, *De doctrina Christiana*, 3.98 (44)—99 (44) (that Christ and his church are sometimes spoken of as one person should not create difficulty when a transition is made from the head (Christ) to the body (church) or from the body to the head without having indicated a change of person).

[114] Augustine, *Serm.* 341.(9).11. Elsewhere Augustine said that "the head and the body that is Christ and his church form one single person." Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana*, 3.98 (44)—99 (44).

them.[115] When Augustine attributed everything that related to sin to the Christ-body, and everything else to the Christ-head, he thereby identified two mutually enforcing aspects of Christ's becoming human. First, the Incarnation was the primary, physical means by which humanity was united to Christ because it brought about the union of Christ's human nature with the pain and suffering of human beings. Second, the doctrine of the hypostatic union of Christ and the church made it possible to attribute the human condition of sin and weakness not to Christ proper, but to his mystical body.[116] The state of being sinful was, therefore, intimately woven into the fabric of the human condition.

This profound bond between Christ and humanity did not figure prominently in the christology of Leo, who had very little to say about the mystical body of Christ. Though he conceived of a mystical union, he thought it took place either during baptism or the receiving of the eucharist, when the body of the Christian was transformed into the body of Christ, which was also the body of a man ('corpus hominis').[117] During this transformation, the Christian was cleansed of all sin. While Leo's mystical transformation was related to the sacraments, Augustine's pertained to the hypostatic union that occurred in Christ proper. That is why the bond that Leo conceived of was not as deeply knit as the ontological connection that Augustine devised. Leo did not rule out, as Augustine had, that God and man, Christ and the church, were two distinct entities somehow connected in one discrete flesh. Both pairs issued forth from the flesh of Christ when it received the mystery of redemption and regeneration.[118] In reaching that conclusion Leo was probably influenced by John Cassian, who differed from Augustine in understanding Christ to have a dual aspect. Even that duality was Augustinian in the sense that Cassian, like Augustine, perceived the union of Christ and the church as analogous to the marriage between a man and a woman. The two distinct entities became one single human flesh similarly united to God and to the soul, because the flesh of the

[115] See e.g., Augustine, *Tract. in. Ev. Io*, 21.3. Van Bavel, *Recherches*, p. 112.

[116] Van Bavel, *Recherches*, p. 113. Augustine says in *De civ. Dei*, 17. 9, that Christ, who is the head of the church, is without sin, which is found only in his body and members, i.e., among the people who are his church.

[117] Leo, *Ep.* 59.4, 22 February 450, Jaffé 447.

[118] Leo, *Ep.* 59.4, 22 February 450, Jaffé 447. Leo's exegesis of *Eph.* 5.30–32, therefore, differs from Augustine's.

church was analogous to the flesh of Christ, in both of whom God and the soul existed.[119]

Leo departed from this model when he portrayed the human nature of Christ as directly bound to the identity of human beings. It was this unmediated connection that colored his perception of the quality of the emotions that Christ experienced. That Christ assumed a fully human nature by a voluntary act implied that he did not merely acquiesce to human emotions, but subjected himself fully to them. This way of construing the emotional life of Christ resolved a problem that Leo perceived in Augustine, who at times made the divine will acting in Christ rule his human emotions.

> By means of his flesh the Lord operated two sorts of actions, the miracles and the sufferings; the miracles come from on high, the sufferings from below. Those miracles that he did were divine; but he did them by means of his body, he did them by means of his flesh. The flesh therefore operating divine things is the psaltery: the flesh suffering human things is the harp.[120]

The 'psaltery' was the divinely-inspired words of David that came to life through the instrument of the harp, just as the divinity of Christ was expressed through the reality of his human flesh. The christological problem that would have resulted from Christ's experiencing a conflict between his divinely-guided will and his human desires was thereby avoided.[121] But Leo feared, with good reason, that the genuineness of Christ's human emotions might be undermined were they to be dominated by his divine will.[122] A suffering that was determined and governed by the will of the individual, whether that will was human or divine, would have removed from the experience the uncertainty

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[119] John Cassian, *De Incarn. Chr.*, 5.12.

[120] See e.g., Augustine, *En. in ps.*, 56.16. For a discussion of the operation of the will in human beings, see Augustine, *De civ. Dei* 14.6. When the will conforms to God, the emotions are as they should be.

[121] For further discussion, see Van Bavel, *Recherches*, p. 135. Augustine, *Con. serm. ar.* 6–7, PL 42, 687–688. Augustine's theology of the Trinity acknowledged that the will of the Father and that of the Son are always the same. They can never differ because the nature of the Trinity is immutable. Ibid. 7. That Jesus' will was never in opposition to God's is a fact of the God-man. Because of grace, the human nature of Jesus finds itself incapable of sinning. The cause of such obedience, his willingness to do not his will but God's will alone, was his dual aspect. He was not only man, but also God.

[122] Leo thought that Christ was not subject to human temptation because his emotions were partly controlled by the Godhead. That view was current by Leo's time. See *Ep.* 35.3, 13 June 449, Jaffé 429: 'veritas affectionum sub moderamine Deitatis et mentis.' "The reality of his emotions were under the direction of his divinity and mind."

over whether and when the suffering might end. Under such controlled conditions, the anguish that Christ experienced would have been less than fully real.

Augustine developed the view that suffering was a profound act of divine acquiescence when he confronted the Apollinarians, the Manichaeans, the Pelagian Julian of Eclane, and even the Arians, most of whom objected, to varying degrees, that orthodox christology made Christ improperly subject to the necessity ('sub necessitate') of his human emotions.[123] Among them, the Apollinarians believed that if Christ had truly felt the affections of his soul, then his divinity would have been compromised for having been subject to human pain. To defeat such claims, Augustine considered the limits of the physical suffering of Christ. Although Christ had been placed under a kind of necessity when he suffered his Passion, he had, nonetheless, experienced that suffering by a free disposition of his will ('dispensationis voluntate'). At stake here was the definition of 'under necessity' ('sub necessitate'), the concept that his adversaries had used. For Augustine, it meant that Christ had voluntarily acquiesced in his pain, for he had experienced human feelings and the infirmities of his body by the same free disposition of his will. His divinity was not thereby undermined, because Christ, unlike human beings, died by an act of his divinely-guided will. Since it was not generally a characteristic of real human pain, the presence of necessity, according to Augustine, neither compromised the suffering that was the Passion of Christ, nor made the affective emotions any less genuine.[124] Leo would not have found such an argument convincing. If the extent and end of Christ's suffering had remained always within his view, as Augustine seemed to say, then his emotions would have had more in common with the endurance of physical exercise than with the vicissitudes and uncertainties that were the conditions for experiencing genuine pain.

In construing the humanity of Christ as fully real, Leo had his limits. He was made to confront them when he interpreted the passages in Scripture dealing with the abandonment of Christ on the Cross.

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[123] See Van Bavel, *Recherches*, p. 128. Augustine wrote his *De nuptiis et concupiscentia* against Julian of Eclane, who responded with his treatises *Ad Florum* and *Libri IV ad Turbantium*, in both of which he accused Augustine of Manichaeism. From Quodvultus-deus (*Liber promissionum* 4.6) and Prosper (*Epit. Chron.*, a. 439, 1336) we learn that Leo, when he was deacon, successfully prevented Julian from rejoining the church during the papacy of Sixtus III. See Quasten, iv, p. 488.

[124] See e.g., Augustine, *De diversis quaestionibus*, 80.4.

"Let no simple and indifferent listener receive the words he spoke, 'My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?' as though, when Jesus was fixed to the wood of the Cross, the might ('omnipotentia') of the paternal Godhead had withdrawn from him."[125] The problem for the interpreter was to explain how Christ could have been abandoned by the God who he was. Leo never portrayed Christ as such an ordinary human being that the passage signaled that the power of God had departed from him:[126] "The nature of God and man had joined into such a great union that it could not be dissolved by execution ('supplicium') or divided by death."[127] The personal union between the divine and human natures being intimately intertwined, Christ could not have been abandoned by someone from whom he was incapable of being separated.[128] It was ontologically impossible. That is why Leo interpreted the lamentation on the Cross as a statement of Christ's theological teaching ('doctrina'), rather than of his emotional complaint ('querela').[129] The cry did not come from his emotional pain, or from his need of assistance, but from his compassion for humanity that he expressed definitively in his decision to die ('definitio moriendi').[130] It was not the human nature of Christ that pondered his abandonment, but all humanity that was represented in him through the feelings of compassion and empathy that he experienced on the Cross. Responding to this compassion by imitating it was the way in which human beings acknowledged each other as the innately altruistic creatures that they were.

This was not the Augustinian doctrine of the mystical body of Christ, by which Christ was linked to humanity through his hypostatic union with the church. It was the doctrine of redemption that saw Christ as the mediator between God and humankind. A humanity that could not obtain what it sought through its weakness and its cries for help needed

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[125] Leo, *Serm.* 68.1, 31 March 454, *Sermo proximus, dilectissimi.*

[126] The word 'derelinquo', which Leo borrows from the scriptural passages (*Mt.* 27.46; *Mark* 15.34), means 'to abandon' or 'to desert', but also means 'to give over to', which is related to its earlier usage, meaning, 'to give up a claim to, or possession of'.

[127] Leo, *Serm.* 68.1, 31 March 454. Here 'supplicium' does not mean 'entreaty' or 'supplication', but is rather the technical legal term signaling the punishment for a crime.

[128] Leo, *Serm.* 67.7, 28 March 454, *Semper quidem, dilectissimi.*

[129] Ibid.

[130] Leo, *Serm.* 68.2, 31 March 454. In other words, Leo thought that Christ asked the question on behalf of humanity, who was frightened at seeing the suffering of the flesh. *Serm.* 67.7, 28 March 454.

a mediator to intervene. Crying, "God, why have you abandoned me?" Christ distinguished the emotion that he released in order to express humanity's fears from the other emotions that he chose to experience according to the divine will of the Father that was also his.[131] That the emotions of Christ were twofold meant that his suffering on the Cross made him empathize with, rather than experience, the fear that humanity experienced. It made him want to heal. The cry, as Leo interpreted it, signaled that the fear that was proper to the flesh had been conquered, the will of his Father had been honored, and the threat of death had been abolished. It was the cry of a redeemer that answered the mystery of the purpose of Christ..[132]

The sort of abandonment that Leo envisioned, therefore, was not a withdrawal of the divinity from the person of Christ. It was his decision to abandon himself to the weakness of human flesh and to submit to the will of his Father. There was no dualist struggle between flesh and spirit in the person of Christ, either for Leo or for Augustine. The cry rather expressed his submission to the plan of God to subject him to the suffering that was his death. It did not indicate the psychological state of the person of Christ. Augustine thought it was merely apparent and the abandonment not fully real, his mystical body having made this cry because of its hypostatic connection to humanity. Leo, in contrast, was so committed to preserving the integrity of Christ's human nature and to rejecting even the slightest hint of docetism that he construed the abandonment as a genuine expression of the suffering of Christ, the quality of which he specified obliquely. It was the moment that enabled him to empathize with human suffering and to speak on behalf of it to God. It gave him the credentials to act as the redeemer that he was.

4. *Christ as example*

While the abandonment of Christ on the Cross explored how God related to human beings, the presence of his two distinct natures implied how human beings related to God. The relationship, as Leo con-

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[131] Leo, *Serm.* 67.7, 28 March 454. *Matt* 26. 39, 42. When Jesus said, "'My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass me by. Nevertheless, not as I will but as you will,' and later, 'Father, if this cup cannot pass me by unless I drink it, your will be done,'" Leo thought Jesus was saying that he had fulfilled his divine plan for the healing and "reconciliation of the world."

[132] Leo, *Serm.* 67.7, 28 March 454.

ceived it, was a two-way street. It could be explored by human beings, because the human life of Christ served as an example to imitate what he did and to love what he loved.[133] The notion of example, therefore, carried a moral connotation that exceeded the heroic examples that had been offered in the secular literature. Its corollary was the remedy of salvation, in which the emptying of divinity into human form not only made God accessible, but also brought about redemption. Remedy and example, expressed in its various forms, became the two mutually enforcing aspects of the mystery that Leo explored: "A double remedy has been prepared for us wretched people by the Almighty Physician, one of which is in the sacrament, the other in his example."[134] Generally the remedy of salvation conferred divine grace, while the example of Christ's human life required a similarly human response in the lives of Christians.[135] Sometimes the two were conflated, so that not only the example, but also the remedy, was construed as a rule of living that had been given in order to guide Christian conduct: "Our remedies have prescribed for us a rule for living, and, from that fact, a pattern has been given for our conduct, from which medicine can be dispensed to the dead."[136] Augustine connected this related set of concepts to the dual natures in Christ, so that the humanity implied the remedy ('medicina') of salvation, and the divinity the power ('potentia') of human creation.[137] Restoring the remedy to the divinity and the example to the humanity, Leo inverted the pattern in order to emphasize the humanity of Christ that was the example of a human life that Christians were to emulate.

It entailed a self-conscious remodeling of the notion of grace that Leo inherited from Augustine. Throughout the Pelagian controversy,

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[133] Leo, *Serm.* 72.5, 21 April 444, *Totum quidem, dilectissimi.*

[134] Leo, *Serm.* 67.5, 28 March 454. 'Ab omnipotenti enim medico duplex miseris remedium praeparatum est, cuius aliud est in sacramento, aliud in exemplo.'

[135] Ibid.

[136] Leo, *Serm.* 37.2, 6 January 452, *Memoria rerum ab humani generis Salvatore gestarum.* 'Legem ergo vivendi remedia nobis nostra sanxerunt, et inde data est moribus forma, unde mortuis est inpensa medicina.'

[137] Augustine, *Tract. in Ev. Io.*, 36.2. 'Si Deum tantum dixeris Christum, medicinam negas qua sanatus es: si hominem tantum dixeris Christum, potentiam negas qua creatus es.' "If you say that Christ is only God you deny the remedy that saves you; if you say that Christ is only man you deny the power that created you." In this context, the words 'medicina' and 'remedium' are used interchangeably. Augustine also paired example with sacrament, see B. Studer, "'Sacramentum et exemplum' chez saint Augustin," *Recherches Augustiniennes* 10 (1975), pp. 87–141; R. Dodaro, *Christ and the Just Society in the Thought of Augustine* (Cambridge, 2004), pp. 122–146.

Augustine pondered how the human nature of Christ, which was nearly the same as human beings', could have ever merited being united with the Word. The union came about, he said, not through individual merit, as the Pelagians claimed, but mysteriously through divine grace.[138] Although a doctrine of grace also appeared among the Pelagians, they thought it consisted in either nature and free will ('natura et liberum arbitrium'), or in the gift of the law and teaching ('lex atque doctrina'), by which God instructed human beings how they might avoid evil and perform good works.[139] What distinguished Augustine's thought from theirs was that grace, as he saw it, was a gift given freely: "This grace of Christ, moreover, without which neither infants nor adults can be saved, is not rewarded for merits, but is given as a gift ('gratis'); that is why it is called 'grace' ('gratia')."[140] The best example of this freely-given gift was the Incarnation: because the human nature in Christ did not exist prior to the union, it could not have possibly merited the union. Commenting upon the similarity between this doctrine and the view of the Incarnation held among the theologians from the school of Antioch, Van Bavel has observed,

> The Antiochene adoptionists had spoken in similar terms. But Augustine probably did not know them, and if he had it is unlikely that he would have used their terminology since their orthodoxy had been compromised for a long time. They believed that the union of grace qualified the union itself, while Augustine believed that the idea of union by grace does not bear upon the nature of the union. For him, it is the principle by which the union is accomplished.[141]

After his encounter with the Pelagians, Augustine was opposed to the idea of a natural and moral union in Christ.[142] To claim otherwise would have implied that there was a brief moment during which Christ

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[138] For Augustine's argument against the Pelagians, who had said that the union and salvation depend on merit, see *Serm.* 185.3 (human beings have not merited the gift of God's having given his only Son, but received it freely through the grace of God); *De gratia Christi et de peccato originali*, 1.27 (love from God not the result of merits); *De correptione et gratia*, 30. Van Bavel, *Recherches*, p. 37.

[139] Augustine, *De gratia Christi et de peccato originali*, 3; ibid. 9; ibid. 34.

[140] Augustine, *De natura et gratia*, 4. 'Haec autem Christi gratia, sine qua nec infantes, nec aetate grandes salvi fieri possunt, non meritis redditur, sed gratis datur; propter quod et gratia nominatur.'

[141] Van Bavel, *Recherches*, p. 178 (my transl. from the French). When Leo delineates the natures according to their acts and operations he, too, seems, according to M.-J. Nicolas, similar to the Antiochene dualists. See Nicolas, "La doctrine christologique de saint Léon le Grand," *Revue Thomiste* 51 (1951), p. 640.

[142] Augustine, *De peccatorum meritis et remissione et de baptismo parvulorum*, 2.38 (People are

was purely a man, a moment during which he was not simultaneously the Son of God. That view had already been discredited by Augustine and the other Latin theologians when they confronted the adoptionists just mentioned. The grace that effected the union of the divine and human natures was the basis for Christ's virtues. His virtues were not the basis for grace. It raised him above the sinful condition of human beings and imbued him with a sense of absolute justice. Grace, therefore, operated differently for the Word in its union of divinity with human nature than it did for people in their relationship to divinity, or even for the saints.[143] John Cassian agreed. Divinity did not inhabit Christ, as it did the saints, rather Christ possessed within himself the fullness of divinity in a way that enabled him to distribute it widely: indwelled by the divinity, Christ indwelled each of the saints to the extent he deemed them worthy.[144]

Like Augustine, Leo thought that grace brought about the union of Christ's divine and human natures. In the mysteries of Christ that were his works and actions, he found both the effects of that grace and its influence ('incitamentum') upon the formation of orthodox doctrine.[145] When Christians followed these examples they were thought to acknowledge Christ and subscribe to correct doctrine. There was also something useful in the works and actions of Christ[146] that did not merely serve to communicate the presence of divine grace, as Augustine implied, or to facilitate the formulation of doctrine. Christians were not only to venerate his example, but to profit from it by an act of profound imitation.[147] In assigning to the human actions of Christ such a prominent role in the lives of Christians, Leo subtly transformed the doctrine of grace that Augustine had developed in his confrontation with the Pelagians.

Prior to that controversy, Augustine had conceived of a limited notion of example. While Abraham and other figures from the Old Testament offered examples of faith, the faith of Christ was the prime exam-

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sons of God by grace; Christ is Son of God by nature. His mother merited by her faith that the holy seed be placed within her.)

[143] Augustine, *De correptione et gratia*, 38 (the will to persevere is given to the saints through divine grace; the will of human beings is influenced by divine grace.) Neither ordinary people nor the saints are united to God through divine grace.

[144] John Cassian, *De Incarn. Chr.*, 5.4.

[145] Leo, *Serm.* 37.1, 6 January 452.

[146] Leo, *Serm.* 25.6, 25 December 444, *Quamvis, dilectissimi.*

[147] Ibid. See also Leo, *Serm.* 37.1, 6 January 452.

ple of virtue that served as a model for Christian conduct.[148] Faith, like grace, was given to human beings freely by God, but differed from grace insofar as it was the beginning of merit in human beings[149] that imbued them with the capacity to perform good deeds. Christ also served as an example of the image of God in whose image and likeness the soul of human beings had been made. The concept of example was, therefore, given a soteriological function by demonstrating that through this perfect image human nature had the innate capacity to be redeemed. Only after the Pelagian controversy did the idea of example recede.[150]

Augustine represented the Pelagians as subscribing to the view that following the example of Christ imbued human beings with the grace that was also the example for imitation that Christ provided. He related it to their threefold theological anthropology, which consisted in 'ability', 'volition', and 'action', all three of which enabled human beings to fulfill God's commandments.[151] 'Ability' determined the extent to which a human being was able to be righteous; 'volition' that to which a human being willed to be righteous; 'action' that to which a human being actually was righteous. Only the first of these, 'ability', was considered to be bestowed by God and not within the power of human beings, while the other two, 'volition' and 'action', were viewed as appropriate to and attainable by human action alone. What Augustine found objectionable was the Pelagians' confidence in the fully human faculties of 'volition' and 'action', and their denigration of the faculty of 'ability', which came from God. He found it paradoxical that only the so-called divinely-imbued faculty of 'ability' required the assistance of grace.

Although their disagreement often played out in the sphere of verbal definitions, it was ultimately grounded in their opposed conceptions of the nature of human action. For the Pelagians, though the will that guided action had the capacity for autonomous choice, it was neutral in the sense that its innate orientation did not itself direct the choices that it made. Grace was construed as being merely a stimulus for the will, and not the necessary precondition for its functioning. Augustine,

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148 W. Geerlings, *Christus Exemplum, Studien zur Christologie und Christusverkündigung Augustins* (Mainz, 1978), pp. 183–187.

149 Augustine, *De gratia Christi et de peccato originali*, 34 (People receive without merit the faith that is the beginning of merit.)

150 Geerlings, *Christus Exemplum*, pp. 216–219.

151 Augustine, *De gratia Christi et de peccato originali*, 4–5.

in contrast, saw the will not as a neutral entity, but as an energy defined by the direction of human aspiration. It was their differing conceptions of the innate motivation of the human being, therefore, and not simply the role of grace in the performance of good works, that defined their theological quarrel. Was the human person free to go in whatever direction she chose, as the Pelagians said, or was she bound to be guided by the currents of desire and aspiration, as Augustine claimed? While the Pelagians thought that sin was the result of choices, Augustine thought it was the result of choices informed by a false love. Because the trouble with the sinner, according to Augustine, was that he was always wanting wrongly, the deeper problem was the choice of self against and instead of God. The consequence of the Pelagians' misunderstanding of the nature of human action was to reduce the role of Christ to merely pointing out for humanity the path on which they were to walk.[152] Such a view was inadequate for Augustine, who thought that following the example of Christ applied only to his teachings and did not imbue Christians with the capacity to effect their own salvation, which required the assistance of grace.[153]

With Leo the notion of example was broadened once again, for he, unlike Augustine, subscribed to a theological anthropology that emphasized the role that suffering and the emotions played in the continuing drama of human action. People were neither bound by the currents of their innate aspirations, nor entirely free to travel in whatever direction they chose. They were gently guided, through their compassionate and altruistic choices, toward a life imbued with the same grace that made such choices possible. For Augustine, the feeling of compassion was stirred by recognizing that all human beings shared the same sinful nature that required the mercy of grace.[154] Feeling compassion did not necessarily result in human action, as it did for Leo. It is all the more striking that Leo was so decisive in this regard, given that his friend and colleague John Cassian criticized Nestorius (in 431) for reviving in his christological thought the heresy of Pelagianism, where 'example' was destined to play a prominent role.

When Leo was a deacon for the church in Rome, Nestorius had written a letter to pope Caelestine charging his opponent in the christolog-

[152] Ibid. 45; see also ibid. 2, 42.
[153] Augustine, *De natura et gratia*, 62.
[154] M.C. Nussbaum, *Upheavals of Thoughts. The Intelligence of Emotions* (Cambridge, 2001), pp. 551–552.

ical debates, Cyril of Alexandria, with subscribing to Apollinarianism. Caelestine discredited the charge in part because Nestorius was known to have violated the canons when he welcomed Pelagian exiles from the West into the churches of Constantinople. At the request of Leo, John Cassian composed the seven books against Nestorius that accused him of subscribing to Pelagianism. He seemed to think that the notion of 'goodwill' that Nestorius used to describe the union between the divine and human natures sounded similar to, although it was clearly independent of, the Pelagians' idiosyncratic view of grace that Augustine and the other Latin theologians had already condemned. Nestorius, like the Pelagians, was made to subscribe to the view that people had the capacity to follow Jesus' example without assistance from God because he was merely an ordinary man who had lived without sin.[155] They both were said to deny that there was any difference between human beings and Christ, whose saintly life as Jesus had merited the union.[156] The purpose of the Incarnation for those who held such views was not to redeem the human race, but merely to present an example of good works for people to emulate.[157] This idea of example was said to be deeply embedded in the contours of Pelagian and Nestorian thought, because it arose from their "shared belief" that only the man was born from Mary and that the Son of man was ontologically separate from the Son of God.[158] Nestorius' most contentious and notorious remarks were adduced to support these allegations: the Virgin who gave birth to Christ as a man should be called 'Christotokos', the mother of Christ, and not 'Theotokos', the mother of God, he said.[159] From this statement Cassian and others reasoned that if the Virgin Mary was not the 'Mother of God', then the Jesus she gave birth to was not divine. That is how Nestorius was made to subscribe to the controversial view that Christ was merely a 'good example' for humanity to emulate.

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[155] John Cassian, *De Incarn. Chr.*, 1.3.

[156] John Cassian, *De Incarn. Chr.*, 5.1.

[157] John Cassian, *De Incarn. Chr.*, 1.3 ('Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum hunc in mundum, non ad praestandam humano generi redemptionem, sed ad praebenda bonorum actuum exempla venisse.' "Our Lord Jesus Christ has come into this world not to grant redemption to the human race, but to offer an example of good works.").

[158] John Cassian, *De Incarn. Chr.*, 6.14.

[159] John Cassian, *De. Incar. Chr.*, 5.1. See Nestorius, *Epistula Nestorii ad Iohannem antiochenum* (CPG 5671) F. Loofs, *Nestoriana* (Halle, 1905), p. 185, lines 1–16. He suggested the term 'Christotokos' as a compromise for the factions in Constantinople that were quarreling about the titles that were to be applied to the Virgin.

Leo avoided the doctrinal snares of Pelagianism by insisting that Christ gave human beings this example without their having merited it.[160] The exemplary life of Christ demanded, nonetheless, that Christians perform moral actions and obey moral precepts,[161] for he reasoned that even secular law required that its subjects embrace the opinions, customs, and principles of its leaders.[162] Here Leo was charting new territory.[163] Christians were not to accept the gift of grace that was the remedy of salvation without acknowledging that gift by responding to His call.[164] Those who did not imitate Christ by emulating his humility, weakness, and suffering were not truly Christians.[165] Although Augustine had criticized the Pelagians for making Christ merely an example of the path on which Christians were to walk, Leo did not hesitate to designate him, 'the way ('via')', 'the example to be imitated', 'the path to be taken', because his manner of life as a teacher had already illustrated to his disciples how appropriate these titles were.[166]

Leo feared that his congregations might become so distracted by their present anxieties that they might delay in modeling their lives after the example that Christ represented: "Let the actions of this present life occupy us neither so anxiously nor so proudly that we do not … strive to be shaped by our Redeemer through his example."[167] They were to endure the dangers of the present world, not flee from them.[168]

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[160] Leo, *Serm.* 35.3, 6 January 445.

[161] Leo, *Serm.* 35.3, 6 January 445, and *Serm.* 36.4, 6 January 451, *Dies, dilectissimi.*

[162] Leo, *Serm.* 72.1, 21 April 444.

[163] and, therefore, softening the deterministic elements in Augustine's doctrine of grace and predestination. P.L. Barclift, "Predestination and Divine Foreknowledge in the Sermons of Pope Leo the Great," *Church History* 62 (1993), p. 20.

[164] Cf. Leo, *Serm.* 67.5–6, 28 March 454. Having restored humanity after the Fall, Christ, as Leo saw it, insisted that his precepts ('praecepta') be followed. Leo, like Cassian, envisioned "one very general level of grace that precedes our acts and another that enables us to complete the acts that we begin of our own free will." Barclift, "Predestination and the Divine Foreknowledge in the Sermons of Pope Leo the Great," p. 19. See Leo, *Serm.* 72.1, 21 April 444.

[165] Leo, *Serm.* 25.6, 25 December 444. "In vain, in fact, are we called Christians if we are not imitators of Christ." 'Frustra autem appellamur christiani, si imitatores non sumus Christi.' Cf. 1 *Cor.* 11. 1.

[166] Leo, *Serm.* 63.4, 19 March 452, citing 1 Peter 2. 21–24. "Blessed Peter the apostle [says that] 'Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his footsteps.'" Cf. *Serm.* 25.6, 25 December 444: 'ut conversatio magistri sit forma discipulis' "that the teacher's way of life might be a pattern for disciples."

[167] Leo, *Serm.* 66.4, 10 April 453. 'Nec ita nos nunc anxie, nunc superbe praesentis vitae occupent actiones, ut … conformari Redemptori nostro per ipsius exempla nitamur.'

[168] Leo, *Serm.* 71.6, 3/4 April 443, *Sermone proximo, dilectissimi.*

That is how Leo addressed the unsettling times in which they lived, as the Huns, Goths, and Vandals made deep and lasting inroads into Roman territory. Fear, persecution, labor, and sorrow were the natural condition of the Christian life because Christ had experienced the same.[169] "Who then does not recognize the stages of his own life in him? Who does not see that his taking of food, his rest in sleep, his anxiety ('sollicitudo') in sorrow, and his tears of compassion made his form that of a servant?"[170] That Christ experienced these and other emotions as a real human being made him an example of fortitude by which people might overcome their sorrows and fears.[171]

The example, *par excellence*, of fortitude was of course the martyrs, whose *paraenetic* function was without parallel. "For instructing the people of God no pattern ('forma') is more useful than martyrdom. Eloquence may be suitable ('facilis') for exhortation, reason may be effective in persuasion, but examples are more powerful than words, and it is better to teach by deeds than by words," Leo preached at a feast celebrating the martyrdom of St. Lawrence.[172] The primary value of the martyrs was the honor that they exemplified, which was bestowed upon those who imitated Christ. Among the most honorable of martyrs were the innocent children who had been slaughtered at Herod's command.[173] They and the other martyrs differed from Christ, for they had received the crown of martyrdom, but had not given it to others; they had provided examples of patience and fortitude, but had not offered the gift of justification;[174] and their experience of death had affected them alone, for it had not paid the debt ('debitum') of humanity.[175] Their example of fortitude, nevertheless, increased the number of Christians at a time when the secular rulers sought to eliminate them through persecution.[176] Although the martyrs were exemplary, Leo did

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[169] In their daily lives Christians were to imitate the experience and transformation that was the suffering of Christ's Passion and Resurrection. "… so that among the dangers of the present life we might not so much wish to avoid them by escaping as to overcome them by enduring." Leo, *Serm.* 67.6, 28 March 454.

[170] Leo, *Serm.* 66.4, 10 April 453. See also Leo, *Serm.* 65.2, 8 April 453, *Sermonem, dilectissimi, de gloriosa Domini Iesu Christi passione promissum.*

[171] Leo, *Serm.* 65.2, 8 April 453.

[172] Leo, *Serm.* 85.1, 10 August 446–461 (?), *Cum omnium, dilectissimi.*

[173] Leo, *Serm.* 38.1, 6 January 453, *Causam, dilectissimi.* "The murder of these children [was] the pattern ('forma') for all martyrs," Leo said.

[174] Leo, *Ep.* 124.4. 15 June 453, Jaffé 450.

[175] Ibid. and Leo, *Ep.* 165.5, 17 August 458, Jaffé 542.

[176] Leo, *Serm.* 36.3, 6 January 451.

not ask Christians to imitate them in precisely the way they were to imitate Christ.[177] The martyrs were examples of excellent imitators, but they were not necessarily the primary examples to be imitated. In making such a fine distinction, Leo differed from Augustine, whose "notion of the 'imitation of the martyrs' … was founded on the need to throw a bridge across the crevasse that appeared to separate the martyrs from the faithful," and who, therefore, insisted that it was the martyrs themselves who were the benchmark for imitation.[178] In their "struggle between the love of God and the deep, fierce love of the soul for its own body and for the present life,"[179] they were similar and, therefore, accessible to the human beings who were to love them as examples worthy of being imitated.[180] Given the nature of this human connection, it is not surprising that an ontological chasm persisted between the martyrs and Christ ("The martyr of Christ is far unequal to Christ because the martyr cannot offer salvation"),[181] for upon Christ's death he alone was exempt from the fear that was experienced only through the mystical body. Leo, in contrast, did not think that Christians should imitate the martyrs directly because his Christ differed from Augustine's in being so fully endowed with the human experience of suffering and weakness that ordinary Christians were capable of imitating him. They did not need the martyrs to serve as intermediaries because the ontological chasm between "the sacred and the profane" had already been bridged.[182]

Leo's call to imitate Christ was a profound affirmation of humanity and of the human condition at a time of political instability. It was subtly connected to the idea that human beings who were made 'in the image of God' contained within them the possibility of radiating

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[177] Leo tends to use the word 'forma' when speaking of the martyrs, and 'exemplum' when speaking of Christ.

[178] P. Brown, "Enjoying the Saints in Late Antiquity," *Early Medieval Europe* (2000), p. 11.

[179] Ibid., p. 12.

[180] *ATA*, p. 539. See Augustine, *Contra Faustum Manichaeum*, 20.21. They, like ordinary people, did not despise their flesh. Augustine, *De cura pro mortuis gerenda*, 10. It was mainly their devout fear of God that distinguished them without in any way compromising their respect for human beings: "in fearing God, men were not slighted." Augustine, *Serm.* 65.1 ('Deum timendo, homines contempserunt.') Because they were accessible, "it brought the saints down to the level of their imitators" and "undermined the fundamental antithesis between the sacred and the profane." Brown, "Enjoying the Saints," pp. 16–17.

[181] *ATA*, p. 541. See Augustine, *Tract. in Ev. Io.*, 84.2.

[182] See Brown, "Enjoying the Saints," pp. 16–17.

the divine. "Imitate what he did; love what he loved; and having discovered the grace of God in yourselves, respond by loving your own nature in him."[183] They were to recognize the dignity that was their human nature, which had been corrupted in Adam and then restored in Christ.[184] It enabled them to perform the good works that were the consequence of their imitating Christ.[185] "Let us glorify God in our body," said Leo, "that we may show from the very goodness ('probitas') of our way of life ('conversatio') that he dwells in us."[186] Living in a manner that was morally excellent endowed people with the capacity to imitate Christ, just as imitating Christ enabled people to become morally excellent.[187]

In the light of the uncertainty that consumed their daily lives, Christians were to assuage their fears by recognizing their natural capacity for goodness. "We do not hesitate through lack of faith ('diffidentia'), nor are we in suspense ('suspendere') about an uncertain future. But since the beginning of the promise has been received, we now see with the eyes of faith what the future holds. *Rejoicing in the progress ('provectio') of our nature*, we now hold fast to what we believe (emph. suppl.)."[188] The "appearance of temporal affairs" ('rerum temporalium species') was no longer to concern them, especially if they prevented the feelings of the body, its crippling fears and emotions, from overwhelming their lives. "We are correctly said 'not to be in the body' if bodily feelings do not dominate us," he said.[189] Augustine, who imagined the Christian engaged in "a civil war of interior faults," conceived of the problem differently.[190] He envisioned conflicting passions that the Christian must strive to "bridle, contain, and cure" in order to be delivered "from the body of death." It was not so much a question of assuaging the emo-

[183] Leo, *Serm.* 72.5, 21 April 444. 'Imitamini quod operatus est, diligite quod dilexit, et invenientes in vobis Dei gratiam, vestram in illo redamate naturam.'

[184] Leo, *Serm.* 27.6, 25 December 451.

[185] Cf. Leo, *Serm.* 38.3, 6 January 453. Leo thought that the person who does good deeds had received from God both the effect of her work (i.e., salvation) and the beginning of her desire ('voluntas') to do it (i.e., the capacity to be righteous).

[186] Leo, *Serm.* 55.5, 8 April 442, *Expectationi vestrae, dilectissimi.*

[187] In other words, Christians became morally excellent by imitating Christ. And because they were innately good—i.e., had the natural capacity to be morally excellent—they were capable of imitating Christ.

[188] Leo, *Serm.* 71.4, 3/4 April 443.

[189] Ibid. 71.5.

[190] Augustine, *Contra Iulianum*, 2.7.

tions as it was of conquering them. Leo, in contrast, reassured his congregations that even the disciples had become upset and fearful at the passion of Christ.[191] Christ, who was a complete human person in all its complexity, had himself experienced the profound suffering that was the human condition. It meant that ordinary Christians had been given an excellent example of a feeling person by which to ameliorate their fears.[192]

5. *The symmetry of justice*

That Christ was fully human was made an integral part of Leo's theology of justice through the symmetrical exchange he envisioned between God and humankind.[193] Because the human nature that Christ assumed had also been present in Adam, whose fallen nature humanity inherited through his progeny, human beings were profoundly united with Adam, on the one hand, and with Christ, on the other.[194] This correlation between Adam and Christ was, for Augustine and the other Latin theologians, the exchange that was the mystery of the Incarnation. It made the Incarnation function as both "a commerce and an exchange" because humanity offered its human nature to the Word and thereby participated in the divine.[195] "[Christ] became a sharer of our mortality that he might make us sharers of his divinity," Augustine said.[196] Leo refined this partial exchange of attributes by making the symmetrical relationship between Christ and Adam, and between Adam and fallen humanity, the complete affirmation of the human nature in Christ. "The original bonds of our captivity could not be released unless a man of our kind ('genus') and our nature existed whom previous convictions

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[191] Leo, *Serm.* 60.4, 1 April 445, *Sacramentum, dilectissimi.*

[192] 'Imitation' was, therefore, intimately bound to the relief from anxiety and suffering.

[193] Leo, *Ep.* 124.3, 15 June 453, Jaffé 450.

[194] See e.g., Augustine, *De utilitate jejunii*, 4 (people are born from Adam), and *Tract. in Ev. Io.*, 15.8 (Adam is a type of Christ); see also *De civ. Dei*, 13.14: "For God, the author of natures, not of vices, created man upright; but man, who was of his own will corrupted and condemned justly, begot corrupted and condemned children. For we all were in that one man, since we all were that one man who fell into sin by the woman who was made from him before the sin."

[195] Van Bavel, *Recherches*, p. 76.

[196] Augustine, *De civ. Dei*, 21.16. This is a common theme in Augustine and more generally among the Latin theologians.

for sin did not bind, and who by his stainless blood would wash out the lethal decree ('chirographum lethale')."[197] Divinization was not a possibility for Leo because he was committed to the idea that Christ was linked to humanity only through the complete integrity of his human nature.[198]

The correspondence that Leo and others envisioned between Christ and human beings was influenced by the tradition that stemmed from Irenaeus, who, in the late-second century, had developed an Adam-Christ typology that shaped his soteriology.[199] It was the model underlying many aspects of Latin christology, including 'the commerce and exchange' idea mentioned above. Because human beings had sinned voluntarily and were corrupted at their inception,[200] obeying moral precepts was not sufficient to satisfy the debt that was the consequence of Adam's original sin.[201] A redeemer was thought to be necessary, a son of Adam who had played no part in, and was not tainted by, the original betrayal,[202] who was related to the human race ('nostri generis socius'), yet untouched by its defilement ('nostrae contaminationis alienus').[203] Because such an extraordinary person could not have been conceived naturally, God was said to have devised a different birth for Christ, who was thereby made free from the original defilement.[204] Untainted by sin and unencumbered by its debt, Christ was that extraordinary person

[197] Leo, *Ep.* 165.9, 17 August 458, Jaffé 542. Cf. *Ep.* 124.7, 15 June 453, Jaffé 450. Note that Leo was never as fully committed as Augustine was to the idea that Christ, by assuming human nature, became the representative for all humanity. On the development of Leo's use of the terms 'homo' and 'humanus', see Barclift, "The Shifting Tones of Pope Leo the Great's …," pp. 230–236. 'Homo' was used eventually (457) to describe the person of Christ as a human being, and 'humanus', or one of its derivatives, to indicate what pertained to humanity in general. Ibid., p. 236.

[198] Grillmeier thinks that Leo subscribed to a modified version of Athanasius' and Irenaeus' doctrine of divinization, insofar as the being of Christ represented redeemed humanity. Idem, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. 1, p. 531.

[199] Irenaeus' christology was based on his theory of recapitulation, by which the new man, Christ, restored what the first man, Adam, had corrupted through his sin. See e.g., his *Adversus Haereses*, 3.21.10. See generally A. D'Alès, "La doctrine de la récapitulation en saint Irénée," *RSR* 6 (1916), pp. 185–211.

[200] Leo, *Serm.* 28.3, 25 December 452.

[201] Leo, *Serm.* 23.3, 25 December 442. 'adicienda erat veritas redemptionis moralibus institutis.' "The truth of redemption had to be added to moral precepts."

[202] Leo, *Serm.* 28.3, 25 December 452. This innocent son of Adam was to profit others by his example and merit.

[203] Leo, *Serm.* 23.3, 25 December 442.

[204] Leo, *Serm.* 28.3, 25 December 452.

who satisfied the conditions by which the debt could be equitably paid and the punishment of death rescinded.[205] Leo thought that Christ fulfilled his dual function as mediator and redeemer by sharing equally in the form of God and in the form of a slave. The christological model facilitated a just and symmetrical exchange between the righteousness of the new man, Christ, and the wrongdoing of the first man, Adam.[206]

> In what way could he really accomplish the truth of his mediation unless he who in the form of God is equal to the Father were also a sharer ('particeps') of ours in the form of a slave: so that through one new man there might be a renewal of the old, and the bond of death contracted by the transgression of one man might be released by the death of the one man who alone owed nothing to death? For the pouring out of the blood of the righteous on behalf of the unrighteous was so powerful in its claim ('privilegium'), so rich a ransom ('pretium') that, if the whole community of captors believed in their Redeemer, tyrannical bonds would hold no one.[207]

It was a ransom that was said to be so inherently equitable that it freed all humanity from the debt of death.

This notion of exchange reflected the Roman concern for justice, which preserved the equity of individual cases. Judicial equity, as Leo saw it, was a principle to which people could only aspire, but which Christ in his Incarnation had perfectly embodied in order to restore human beings to their pristine state prior to the Fall. It was Leo's answer to the weakness of the human condition, which prevented the perfect rationality of divine justice from being implemented in the worldly sphere. Because the sin committed by one human being, Adam, had sentenced himself and every other human being to death, a just resolution required that the "sentence of condemnation be rescinded by the just work of a liberator."[208] Humanity, which had sinned voluntarily through the first man Adam, was to be restored through the same human nature that had committed the sin, and not by the divine power alone.[209] As a person who was fully integrated in his divine and

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[205] Leo, *Ep.* 124.3, 15 June 453, Jaffé 450.

[206] Just as Adam was the origin of humanity's fall from grace, so was Christ, especially in his human nature, the origin of its restoration.

[207] Leo, *Ep.* 124.3, 15 June 453, Jaffé 450.

[208] Leo, *Serm.* 56.1, 28 March 443.

[209] Leo, *Serm.* 72.2, 21 April 444. 'Suscepit nos illa natura quae nec nostris sua, nec suis nostra consumeret.' "That nature which received us neither consumed our [nature] in theirs, nor theirs in ours."

human natures, Christ was equipped to pay that debt.[210] Preserving the principles of justice was, in other words, Leo's way of bridging the gap between the divine and human justice. Had the divinity exercised its supreme power unilaterally to restore humanity from its fallen state, then the principles of justice ('norma iustitiae') would have been violated and the gulf between divine and human justice would have persisted.[211] In implementing its judiciary principles, the divine power was never thought to have been changed in any way that might have undermined the perfection of its justice. The Word, therefore, acquiesced voluntarily, and not under compulsion, in an act of humiliation that was the emptying of its powers.

This understanding of the Incarnation as a voluntary emptying had already been settled long ago by such theologians as Augustine, for instance, who was indebted to St. Paul's letter to the Philippians (Phil. 2:6–7),[212] which said: "Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men." Leo agreed that Christ had voluntarily emptied himself of his divinity that he may receive the form of a servant,[213] and that this voluntary act was necessary for human beings who lacked the capacity to receive his divinity. Unable to see God, they viewed him through the veil ('velamen') of a human form.[214] This emptying of the divinity, through which the invisible divinity made itself seen, was the supreme gesture of mercy that was also a compassionate acknowledgment of the

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[210] A.C. Stewart, "Persona in the Christology of Leo I: A Note," *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester* 71 (1989), p. 4.

[211] Leo, *Serm.* 28.3, 25 December 452. 'destruendum peccatum fuit voluntarium et hostile consilium, ut dono gratiae non obesset norma iustitiae.' "Voluntary sin and the enemy plan had to be destroyed so that the standard of justice would not be prejudicial to the gift of grace." Like Augustine, Leo believed that Christ overcame the devil by obeying the principles of justice, not by exercising his divine power alone. See e.g., Augustine, *De Trinitate*, 13.17 ("The devil was not conquered by the power of God, but by [His] justice.") To accomplish that goal, Leo envisioned the Redeemer as having an inviolable, divine nature that was to be united with a passible human being in order to create a mediator between God and man, who could both die in his human nature and vanquish death in his divine. Leo, *Ep.* 28.3, 13 June 449, Jaffé 423.

[212] See e.g., Augustine, *De Trinitate*, 1.14; cf. John Cassian, *De Incarn. Chr.*, 6.20. On the importance of the humility of Christ for Augustine, see G. Bonner, "Christ, God and Man, in the Thought of St. Augustine," *Angelicum* 61 (1984), p. 275.

[213] Leo, *Ep.* 124.7, 15 June 453, Jaffé 450; *Ep.* 28.3, 13 June 449, Jaffé 423; *Ep.* 165.8, 17 August 458, Jaffé 542. In voiding himself of his power, Christ made himself inferior to his Father and even to himself, Leo said. (Lit: "his emptiness" 'eius exinanitio').

[214] Leo, *Serm.* 25.2, 25 December 444.

infirmity of human beings, whose sin prevented them from perceiving the Word unmediated by a human form.[215] Because it had been construed as a paradox, the gesture was never thought to have indicated that the divine power was deficient.[216]

The idea that an overarching justice governed the relationship between humanity and the divine was brought to bear upon the mythology of the devil. Responsibility for humanity's fallen state was assigned to his craftiness, which, as Leo put it, "toyed with [their] minds." Only the details differed slightly among the Latin theologians. While Augustine thought that the devil had persuaded human beings to sin,[217] Leo believed that he had deceived them into losing the divine gift of immortality that was theirs prior to the Fall.[218] Both thought that as a result of the devil's plan, all humanity had been sentenced to death.[219] The devil may have been right about humanity, but he was wrong about Christ, whom he mistakenly thought, for being subject to human weakness, was no different from any other human being who had fallen under his sway. "[The devil] saw him whimper and cry, he saw him 'wrapped in swaddling clothes', presented for 'circumcision' and performing the oblation of 'sacrifice according to the law'. He noticed in addition the usual 'growth of boyhood', and right up through manhood did not doubt that [Christ] developed naturally."[220]

In assuming that the man whom he killed was just as beholden to him as every other human being,[221] the devil was said to have misread the death contract that humanity had signed. He did not see that Christ was a redeemer who had come to pay the debt of Adam that humanity had inherited, and, therefore, attempted to fetter with the bonds of death the only man who did not deserve to be fettered. Through the wrongful death of the divinity, the debt was canceled[222] and the contract

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[215] Leo, *Serm.* 23.2, 25 December 442.

[216] Leo, *Serm.* 25.3, 25 December 444.

[217] Augustine, *Tract. in Ev. Io.*, 52.7 (humanity belonged to the devil not by nature, but by sin, not because the devil had created them, but because he had persuaded them).

[218] Leo, *Ep.* 28.3, 13 June 449, Jaffé 423.

[219] Ibid.

[220] Leo, *Serm.* 22.4, 25 December 441 (Recension A), *Exultemus in Domino, dilectissimi*, cf. *Serm.* 69.3, 4 April 454, *Magnitudo quidem, dilectissimi.*

[221] Ibid.

[222] Leo, *Serm.* 22.4, 25 December 441. Christ was the Redeemer who paid the debt of humanity by accepting in his human nature the weakness and mortality that were the punishment for original sin. *Serm.* 21.2, 25 December 440, *Salvator noster, dilectissimi*, *Serm.* 72.2, 21 April 444.

rescinded,[223] thereby effecting a perfect symmetry between the just condemnation of the human race and the wrongful death of Christ that was sufficient to settle the score. The equity of the case was resolved on a more subtle level as well. The same human nature that was the vehicle by which all humanity was condemned was also in Christ the means by which the mystery of compassion was transmitted to human beings. The same shedding of the blood of Christ that enabled the Jews to kill him also enabled Christ to free the world from its captivity.[224] This was the paradox that Leo embraced not only in the human and divine natures of Christ, but in the vicissitudes of the human condition. Because humanity was the vehicle of the human suffering that was its punishment, on the one hand, and of the divine compassion that assuaged it, on the other, a divine and human redeemer was needed in order for the debt to be equitably paid.

That the principles of justice had been undermined had profound consequences for the structure and integrity of the created world. Because Christ did not deserve to die, the suffering he endured while nailed to the Cross was thought to have reshaped that world,[225] by joining the elements of creation together and making the structure ('conpago') of the present world unstable.[226] "While the Creator was hanging on the gallows, all creation groaned, and all the elements at the same time felt the nails of the Cross. Nothing was free from that punishment."[227] The human death of a divinity that was not supposed to die was seen as an anomaly of such striking proportions that all creation shuddered, the end of creation[228] having paradoxically united the elements of creation.[229] A new order that "reconciled the world to God by destroying enmities" was, therefore, effected through the Passion.[230] By

[223] Leo, *Serm.* 70.1.

[224] Ibid.

[225] Cf. Leo, *Ep.* 28.4, 13 June 449, Jaffé 423. And he was begotten in a new order: although he was invisible in his own nature, he became visible in humanity.

[226] Leo, *Serm.* 55.4, 8 April 442, *Expectationi vestrae, dilectissimi*, i.e., because the divinity had been abased.

[227] Leo, *Serm.* 57.4, 31 March 443, *Sponsionis nostrae memores, dilectissimi.* 'Pendente enim in patibulo creatore, universa creatura congemuit, et crucis clauos omnia simul elementa senserunt. Nihil ab illo supplicio liberum fuit.'

[228] Ibid.

[229] Cf. Leo, *Serm.* 66.3, 10 April 453 and *Serm.* 68.3, 31 March 454.

[230] Leo, *Serm.* 66.3, 10 April 453, and cf. *Eph.* 2, 15–17. Having been born a true man, yet never ceasing to be true God, Christ was considered to be a new creature ('nova creatura'). *Serm.* 27.2, 25 December 451. This new creation that was the Incarnation of

subscribing to it, and by acknowledging the dignity that was intrinsic to them, people were transformed.[231] Instrumental in effecting this transformation and in making the new order accessible was the sacrament of baptism. By receiving the rite, people participated in the Resurrection of Christ, their bodies were reborn as Christians and "made into the flesh of the crucified ('caro Crucifixi')."[232] This was possible because the water of baptism was construed as a mystical washing that was an image of the Virgin's womb, whose virgin conception made Christ's human nature free from sin.[233] The baptismal water that was the instrument of cleansing was imbued with the same power of transformation that had been given to the Virgin.[234] Its capacity for ritual cleansing washed away the residue of sin that was not intrinsic to human nature.[235] Through this rite the human person was transformed from a hapless victim of the devil's plot to a ready participant in the new justice of the altered world.

The purpose of the Incarnation was to conquer death by restoring to human beings the integrity of the human nature that had been theirs prior to the Fall.[236] To forge the unyielding connection between humanity and the divine that made this restoration possible, Leo was adamant to preserve every pertinent aspect of the emotional life of Christ. In defining the qualities in which that consisted, he pondered not only the relationship between the human and the divine, but also

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Christ was reflected in the transition from the law to the gospel, from the synagogue to the church, and from the many sacrifices to the one victim. *Serm.* 68.3, 31 March 454. Finally, Leo saw in this second creation of humankind something that was more miraculous than the first, because he believed that it was greater for God to have restored what had perished than for Him to have made creation again. *Serm.* 66.1, 10 April 453.

[231] Leo, *Serm.* 21.3, 25 December 440. This new order of creation that Leo conceived of was radical because the 'new man' who was Christ distilled from the old human nature all that was good, taking on himself the complete essence of the human race. *Serm.* 22.3, 25 December 445 (Recension A).

[232] Leo, *Serm.* 63.6, 19 March 452.

[233] Leo, *Serm.* 24.3, 25 December 443.

[234] Leo, *Serm.* 25.5, 25 December 444. Leo thought that the same power of the divinity that made Mary bear the Savior also made the water of baptism regenerate the believer.

[235] Their uncleanness ('macula') was washed away and their offenses expiated. Leo, *Serm.* 56.3, 28 March 443.

[236] Leo, *Ep.* 28.3, 13 June 449, Jaffé 423; Leo, *Serm.* 57.4, 31 March 443, *Serm.* 72.2, 21 April 444.

what it meant to live and thrive as a late Roman person.[237] While for Augustine and those such as Athanasius among the Eastern churches, the consequence of the Incarnation was to make human beings divine, moving them that much closer to divinity, for Leo, its purpose was to elevate human beings by embracing the lowliness of what they truly were. His view of the Incarnation was, therefore, inexorably bound to his vision for humanity as suffering and emotional beings. Just as Christ experienced human sorrows and fears as a true human being, so were ordinary Christians to emulate his genuine response to suffering and to respond to each other compassionately in order to become more fully themselves.

[237] Leo did not define the human person in precise, philosophical terms. His purpose was rather to broaden the notion of Christ's humanity in order to permit the full experience of human compassion.

CHAPTER FIVE

OVERTURNING THE ROBBER SYNOD AND PRESERVING CHRIST'S HUMAN NATURE

Leo's understanding of the humanity of Christ did not evolve simply in the placid sphere of intellectual history considered in the previous chapter, but in the tangled world of political controversy, negotiation, and compromise. At the Synod of Ephesus II (August, 449), the so-called 'Robber Synod', which Leo named for its violent suppression of orthodox bishops, Dioscorus, the bishop of Alexandria, and his supporters rejected the *Tome* to Flavian, the same christological document that would later come to represent the epitome of orthodoxy for the Chalcedonian churches.[1] This was not a unilateral action by a few wayward bishops. It was supported by imperial authority.

Theodosius II had convened the synod by an imperial *sacra* (30 March 449) in order to judge the orthodoxy of Eutyches, the archimandrite of Constantinople who had been deposed by a local synod under Flavian's direction for continuing to subscribe to the view that Christ had two natures before the union, but only one nature afterwards.[2] The general sentiment was that Eutyches denied that Christ had a body consubstantial with that of human beings.[3] To defend his orthodoxy,

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[1] Leo coined the phrase *latrocinium* to describe the brutal proceedings. *Epistula Leonis ad Pulcheriam augustam* (d. 20 m. Iul. a. 451). (ep. 95) (*CPG* [8995]) (*CPL* 1656) *ACO* II, 4, pp. 50–51. Basic bibliography: Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition* vol. 1, pp. 526–530; E. Schwartz, *Der Prozeß des Eutyches, Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, München, Philosophisch-historische Klasse, Abt. 5* (Munich, 1929); G. May, "Das Lehrverfahren gegen Eutyches in November des Jahres 448," *AHC* 21 (1989), pp. 1–61; T. Camelot, "De Nestorius à Eutychès: l'opposition de deux christologies," in eds. A. Grillmeier, H. Bacht, *Das Konzil von Chalkedon* I (Wurzburg, 1951), pp. 213–242; J.P. Martin, *Le pseudo-synod connu dans l'histoire sous le nom de Brigandage d'Ephese* (Paris, 1875); E. Honigmann, "The Original Lists of the Members of the Council of Nicaea, the Robber-Synod, and the Council of Chalcedon," *Byzantion* 16 (1944), pp. 22–80; T.E. Gregory, "The Latrocinium: Constantinople and Ephesus," in idem. *Vox Populi. Popular opinion and violence in the religious controversies of the fifth century AD* (Columbus, 1979), pp. 129–161.

[2] *Sacra ad synodum*, ACO II, I, I, pp. 68–69.

[3] Evagrius, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, 1.9; *Ecclesiastical History*, ed. J. Bidez, L. Parmentier (London, 1898).

he filed an appeal on the grounds that Flavian had falsified the records used against him in the local synod.[4] The most significant of his charges was that the notary had failed to record that he, in a spirit of reconciliation, had deferred to Rome, Alexandria, Jerusalem, and Thessaloniki to judge his orthodoxy.[5] Finding Eutyches' claims persuasive, Theodosius granted his petition by assembling a new local synod at Constantinople. There it was decided, partly on technical grounds, that sufficient evidence existed corroborating the charges made in Eutyches' appeal to justify convening a new council. That new council was the Robber Synod, where its conciliar members reinstated Eutyches as orthodox, and (wrongly) condemned and deposed Flavian and Eusebius of Dorylaeum for teaching a doctrine, that Christ had two natures after the union, that did not exist at Nicaea.[6]

Different responses to the decision of the synod were possible. By appealing to the primacy of Rome over the other patriarchal sees, Leo could have issued a papal decree stating that he, as the bishop of Rome, had unilaterally rejected the proceedings of the synod for its refusal to accept his *Tome* as an orthodox statement of christology. Or, he could have accepted its decision as a legitimate declaration issued by an ecumenical council of bishops whose views simply differed from his own. Theodosius took that approach eighteen years earlier when he confirmed as legitimate the two opposing councils held by Cyril of Alexandria and John of Antioch during the meeting of the Council of Ephesus I in 431. His reasoning was that an ecumenical council of bishops had, in each case, rendered the decision.[7] Rejecting both ecclesiastical principles, Leo challenged the decision of the synod by negotiating directly with the imperial court and with the patriarchal bishops, writing letters not only to them, but to the clergy, the monks, and the papal representatives stationed in Constantinople. The task of delivering the letters fell upon his legates, who were charged with convincing the letters' recipients to subscribe to the christological doctrine and ecclesiastical rulings contained in the pages they carried.

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[4] S. Wessel, "Forgery and the Monothelete Controversy: Some Scrupulous Uses of Deception," *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 42 (2001), pp. 201–220.

[5] *Cognitio de gestis contra Eutychem* (d. 13 m. Apr. a. 449) (*in Gestis synodi Ephesinae II et inde in Gestis Chalcedonensibus, Actio I*) ACO II, I, I, p. 175, ¶818.

[6] Evagrius, *Historia Eccelsiastica*, 1.10; see M. Whitby, *The Ecclesiastical History of Evagrius Scholasticus* (Liverpool, 2000), p. 28, n. 96.

[7] *Sacra directa per Iohannem comitem concilio*, ACO I, I, 3, pp. 31–32. See Wessel, *Cyril of Alexandria and the Nestorian Controversy*, pp. 255–267.

This way of negotiating with the East should not be understood simply by imagining letters and persons being dispatched from Rome to the eastern imperial court and to the patriarchal sees. Leo forged new relationships not only between himself and these various destinations, but also among the imperial court, the patriarchal bishops, the monks and clergy, and the papal representatives. The networks he created gradually facilitated the acceptance of his ecclesiastical policies in certain segments of the East.[8]

1. *Negotiating with the imperial court*

To challenge the decisions of the Robber Synod, Leo made an impassioned plea to the western imperial family, the emperor Valentinian III, his mother Galla Placidia, and his wife Licinia Eudoxia Augusta ('Eudoxia'). They were worshiping in the Basilica of St. Peter in Rome in early 450 when Leo, accompanied by bishops and clerics from several western provinces, approached them, imploring that the decisions of the synod be overturned and that his *Tome* be accepted as a comprehensive statement of orthodoxy. They were to take advantage of their dynastic ties with the eastern court by sending letters there, informing their relative Theodosius that the synod had improperly rejected the *Tome* and that Leo, as the bishop of Rome, had the power to decide all matters pertaining to the faith. This was a direct challenge, transmitted through the channels of familial relationships, to the authority of the eastern imperial court and its capacity to participate in ecclesiastical affairs. Theodosius, after all, had convened the Robber Synod and continued to support Dioscorus, its president and architect. By asking the western imperial family to intervene, Leo implied that they supported his theological and ecclesiastical views, and that they rejected those of Theodosius and the Alexandrian see.[9] It was a hostile maneuver that was softened by the diplomatic manner in which it was conveyed.

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[8] For this remark I have not included citations to the secondary literature because I am not aware of previous scholarship that has approached these incidents through the lens of Leo's skill in negotiation.

[9] See Leo, *Epp.* 55–58; *Epistula Valentiniani iii imperatoris ad Theodosium augustum* (m. Febr. exeunte a. 450), ACO II, 3, I, pp. 13–14; *Epistula Gallae Placidiae ad Theodosium augustum* (m. Febr. exeunte a. 450), ACO II, 3, I, pp. 14–15; *Epistula Eudoxiae (Liciniae) ad Theodosium augustum* (m. Febr. exeunte a. 450), ACO II, 3, I, p. 15; *Epistula Gallae Placidiae ad Pulcheriam augustam* (m. Febr. exeunte a. 450), ACO II, 3, I, p. 13.

Each member of the western imperial family responded individually to Leo's request by writing vivid letters to Theodosius that are worth quoting at length for the rare glimpse they provide into the mechanics of imperial negotiation. Galla Placidia described an emotional scene in which Leo,

> because of his sadness which was punctuated with sighs, was scarcely able to convey his request in words; by the steadfastness of the priestly wisdom, however, he prevailed so that he [managed] to hold back his tears for a little while and, for the sake of the violated faith and as its vindicator, he delivered a clear sermon … We understood that during the Ephesian council [II], where no one guarded the order or the standard of the priesthood, everything was done with such a lack of consideration for the divinity that obstinacy and injustice were said to prevail in the condemnation of some [of those present].[10]

To undermine the authority of the synod to render a binding decision she informed her nephew Theodosius of the irregularities in ecclesiastical procedure that had taken place when threats of violence made under the direction of Dioscorus had intimidated the clergy: "[the faith] has been recently disturbed by the decision of one man, who in the synod held in the city of Ephesus was said to have incited above all hatred and contention, intimidating Flavian, the bishop of the city of Constantinople, by the presence of and fear [inspired by] his soldiers, [merely] because he had sent an appeal to the apostolic see."[11] This accusation of violence, which was made plausible by mentioning the military presence, was certainly not news to Theodosius, who probably learned of it from the three legates whom Leo sent to Constantinople, Julius, Renatus, and Hilary the deacon.[12] One of those legates, Hilary, had informed Leo of what had happened when he returned to Rome, having narrowly escaped from the synod before being forced

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[10] Leo, *Ep.* 58; ACO II, 3, I, p. 13. 'qui propter interpositam gemitus sui tristitiam, desiderium paene suum verbis insinuare non poterat, vicit tamen constantia sapientiae sacerdotis, ut lacrymas paululum retineret et causam violatae fidei tamquam huius vindex manifesto sermone proferret … Nos itaque in Epheseno concilio, quo nullus ordinem sacerdotii custodivit neque mensuram, sine consideratione divinitatis omnia esse gesta cognovimus, quatenus praesumptio et injustitia in quorumdam damnationem obtinere dicatur.'

[11] Leo, *Ep.* 56; ACO II, 3, I, p. 14. 'fides … nuper turbata sit ad arbitrium unius hominis, qui in synodo Ephesinae civitatis odium et contentiones potius exercuisse narratur, militum praesentia et metu appetens Constantinopolitanae civitatis episcopum Flavianum, eo quod libellum ad apostolicam sedem miserit.'

[12] Leo, *Ep.* 29, Jaffé 424; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Theodosium augustum* (d. 13 m. Iun. a. 449), ACO II, 4, p. 9.

to subscribe to its decrees.[13] Because of the unscrupulous means by which the synod had acted, Eudoxia in her letter to the eastern court demanded that Theodosius hold a new synod to review its findings.[14] Galla Placidia sent a similar letter to Pulcheria, in which she urged her to dismiss the case that had been made against Flavian: "That whatever was decided by that tumultuous and wretched council … be overturned by all the virtue and by all the integrity that endures, the episcopal case should be sent [for review] to the apostolic see."[15]

The letters are striking for their concerted effort not only to exploit the emotional impact of the scene, but to incorporate Leo's view that the eastern court should acknowledge and restore the authority of the bishop of Rome to adjudicate all matters concerning the faith and clergy.[16] They spoke not of a power vacuum in Rome, but of an effective collaboration between the ecclesiastical and political spheres that had been shaped by Leo's prior experience in state diplomacy and by his dealings with the Italian aristocracy. That the imperial family had uniformly succumbed to his wishes suggested not merely that Valentinian was a weak ruler (though he was), but that the interests of the western court coincided with those of Rome to elevate the prestige of its see. Their dynastic ties to the eastern court led them to believe that Theodosius, once he had been duly informed and appropriately persuaded, might reach the same conclusion.

It is surprising, therefore, that this was the only time in Leo's career that he elicited such help from the western court. His prior experience with Theodosius suggests why he found it necessary, in this instance, to do so. Before meeting Valentinian and his family in the Basilica of St. Peter, Leo had written to Theodosius a letter brimming with confidence in the authority of the apostolic see to resolve ecclesiastical controversy: "Formerly and from the beginning, in the councils that were held, we have received such freedom of speech ('fiducia') from the blessed Peter, chief of the apostles, that we have the authority to defend truth for the sake of our peace to the extent that no one can challenge it in

[13] Leo, *Ep.* 44, Jaffé 438; *Epistula Leonis et sanctae synodi ad Theodosium augustum* (d. 13 m. Oct. a. 449), ACO II, 4, p. 19.

[14] Leo, *Ep.* 57; ACO II, 3, I, p. 15.

[15] Leo, *Ep.* 58; ACO II, 3, I, p. 13. 'ut quidquid in illo tumultuoso miserrimoque concilio constitutum est, omni virtute submoveatur et omnibus integris permanentibus ad apostolicae sedis … episcopatus causa mittatur.'

[16] Leo, *Ep.* 55; ACO II, 3, I, p. 14.

any way to be thus defended."[17] In making that appeal, Leo thought he could convince the emperor to annul the judgment of the synod, which, he said, had been reached by unfairly excluding some bishops and receiving others, and to restore the integrity of the faith and Flavian to his see. The claim having been strengthened by the fact that Leo had united the western churches, the emperor was to honor Flavian's request to hold a universal synod in Italy, "that all opposition be cast out or mollified, and that there be no deviation from or ambiguity in the faith."[18] Unmoved by this display of papal authority, the emperor did not respond.

In a new letter, Leo tried a different approach by appealing to the emperor's pragmatic sensibility. He was, at the very least, to apply the same standards of justice to settle the religious controversy that he used in secular affairs: "We ask … that you afford in [your] treatment of divine matters what is granted by the equity of your laws in secular affairs, so that human presumption may not inflict harm upon Christ's gospel."[19] Frustrated by the emperor's continuing silence,[20] his new strategy elicited the support of Pulcheria, dispatching a letter to her in the same post (13 October 449) and attaching a copy of it to the emperor.[21] In it he complained that his papal representative at the council had been forbidden from reading his *Tome*. Confident that she

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[17] Leo, *Ep.* 43.1 Jaffé 437; *Epistula Leonis ad Theodosium augustum* (d. 13 m. Oct. a 449). ACO II, 4, p. 26. 'Olim et ab initio in conciliis celebratis tantam nos percepimus a beato Petro apostolorum principe fiduciam, ut habeamus auctoritatem ad veritatem pro nostra pace defendendam, quatenus nulli liceat sic eam munitari in aliquo commovere.'

[18] Leo, *Ep.* 43.3, Jaffé 437; ACO II, 4, p. 27.

[19] Leo, *Ep.* 44.2, Jaffé 438; *Epistula Leonis et sanctae synodi ad Theodosium augustum* (d. 13 m. Oct. a 449), ACO II, 4, p. 20. 'quaesumus … quodque in saecularibus negotiis legum vestrarum aequitate conceditur, in rerum divinarum pertractione praestate, ut Christi Evangelio vim non inferat humana praesumptio.' Theodosius was to return the church to its earlier state, and he was to convene a council in Italy to resolve the christological dispute.

[20] When he received no reply this time, it was because the deacon Hilary had failed to deliver the letter. Leo, *Ep.* 46; *Epistula Hilari diaconi (postea papae) ad Pulcheriam augustam*. ACO II, 4, pp. 27–28. See also, K.G. Holum, *Theodosian Empresses: Women and Imperial Dominion in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley, 1982), p. 204. From his first letter to Theodosius we learn that Leo was annoyed when Flavian had failed to write, for he thought that he, as the bishop of Rome, was to be fully informed of all relevant matters in order to reach a fair judgment: "The reasoning of our faith ('fidei ratio') … requires the merits of the case [to be known]." Leo, *Ep.* 24.2, Jaffé 421; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Theodosium augustum* (d. 18 m. Febr. a. 449), ACO II, 4, p. 4.

[21] Leo, *Ep.* 45, Jaffé 439; *Epistula Leonis et sanctae synodi ad Pulcheriam augustam* (d. 13 m. Oct. a. 449), ACO II, 4, pp. 23–25.

subscribed to its orthodox view of the Incarnation, Leo asked her to intervene on his behalf with the emperor.[22] What he may not have known was that Pulcheria's relationship with Theodosius was already strained because of her troubles with Nestorius, the deposed bishop of Constantinople whom the emperor had originally appointed. Nestorius had once refused to permit the empress to dine in the episcopal palace after the Sunday service, as had been her custom during the episcopacy of his predecessor, Sinisius. Another time he allegedly defaced her portrait hanging above the altar in church.[23] And during an Easter celebration, he refused the empress access to the innermost sanctuary, even though the privilege had been freely extended to her while Sinisius held the office, thereby preventing her from receiving communion alongside her brother Theodosius. When Nestorius learned from the archdeacon Peter that she intended to enter the sanctuary, he ran to the door and denied her entry into the chamber.[24] Pulcheria demanded access, exclaiming, "Let me enter as I customarily do," to which Nestorius allegedly responded, "Only priests walk here." Pulcheria inquired, "Have I not given birth to God," and Nestorius retorted, sarcastically, "You, you have given birth to Satan!" and chased her from the sanctuary door. Although one narrative has it that Theodosius vowed to exact vengeance on Nestorius for his poor treatment of Pulcheria, most sources indicate that Theodosius favored Nestorius, while Pulcheria detested him.

These contentious encounters with Nestorius, whom the Council of Ephesus I deposed for saying that Christ had two separate natures, did not dissuade the empress from continuing to support the two-nature cause. Her reasons for doing so reflect both her political and theological commitments. A palace eunuch named Chrysaphius had plotted to remove her from power by manipulating the emperor's wife Eudocia into speaking ill of her to the emperor in order that she, Eudocia, might obtain for herself a chamberlain to take charge of her finances (*praepositus cubiculi augustae*). When that strategy failed, Chrysaphius persuaded Eudocia to ask Theodosius to appoint Pulcheria as a deacon, ostensibly in order celebrate her devotion to the church. He agreed, ordering

[22] Leo, *Ep.* 45.2, Jaffé 439; ACO II, 4, p. 24.

[23] Nestorius, *Liber Heraclidis* (*syriace*); *Le Livre d'Héraclide de Damas*, F. Nau, Appendix I, p. 363. Wessel, *Cyril of Alexandria and the Nestorian Controversy*, pp. 101–102.

[24] Nestorius, *Liber Heraclidis* (*syriace*); *Le Livre d'Héraclide de Damas*, F. Nau, Appendix I, p. 364.

that the appointment be made by Flavian, who having perceived that Chrysaphius was, in fact, plotting to remove Pulcheria from the palace, refused to comply with the request.[25] Aware of the plot against her, Pulcheria voluntarily retired to Hebdomon and did not regain her status at court until Chrysaphius fell into disfavor a few months before the emperor died.[26]

The theological issues proved just as compelling as the political machinations. The fact that Chrysaphius was known to subscribe to the single-nature christology of Eutyches, who had also sponsored his baptism, was reason enough for Pulcheria to detest the man.[27] A committed virgin and a devoted supporter of the cult of the Virgin Mary, she must have also perceived that the two-nature view that she championed emphasized the fullness of humanity in Christ. A fully human Christ implicitly acknowledged the role that Mary had played in giving birth to him, thereby recognizing her status as the true Mother of God.[28] Leo probably hoped that her strong convictions in this regard might advance his petition to her brother.

Theodosius replied to the letters from his imperial relatives sometime in 450. His purpose in doing so was not only to defend the legitimacy of the synod he had convened, but his orthodoxy as well. Upholding the sacraments of the fathers as inviolable (he wrote to Valentinian), he had decreed that a council be held in Ephesus (i.e., the Robber Synod) in order to determine who should remain in the church and who should be expelled.[29] He strongly believed that his synod had upheld the rule of faith and the principles of justice in removing Flavian from the church for doctrinal innovation. It is important to remember that both sides of the controversy appealed to such principles, each of whom, like Theodosius, alluded to them not only as a rhetorical ploy, but as a

[25] Theophanes, AM 5940, ed. C. de. Boor, *Theophanis Chronographia* (Leipzig, 1883–1885; repr. Hildesheim, 1980), p. 99. See Holum, *Theodosian Empresses* (Berkeley, 1982), p. 192 ff.

[26] J.B. Bury, *History of the Roman Empire* (New York, 1958), vol. 1, p. 235. Theophanes, 5942 AM, ed. de Boor, *Theophanis Chronographia*, pp. 101–102.

[27] trans. C. Mango, R. Scott, *Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor: Byzantine and Near Eastern History, AD 284–813* (Oxford, 1997), p. 155, fn. 3 and 4.

[28] Although Holum argues that Pulcheria devoted herself to the Virgin for political reasons, that does not mean that she was ignorant of the theological implications of supporting the two-nature view. See Holum, *Theodosian Empresses*, p. 96.

[29] Leo, *Ep*. 62; *Epistula Theodosii rescripta ad Valentinianum*. ACO II, 3, I, p. 16. "We want nothing else than to safeguard as inviolable the sacraments of the fathers that have been handed down to us in succession." 'Nihil aliud volumus quam sacramenta paterna per successionem nobis tradita inviolabiliter custodiri.'

sincere expression of a common ideology. Theodosius made a similar reply to Galla Placidia. There he referred to a series of letters from Leo, no longer extant, that in his view confirmed that he had done nothing to compromise the decrees of Nicaea or of Ephesus (I).

> By this letter we declare what has often been written about thoroughly and clearly, inasmuch as it has been said by the most reverend bishop, from which it is clear without a doubt that we have neither defined nor decreed nor understood anything beyond the faith of the fathers or the divine dogmas or definitions of the most reverend [bishops] who gathered in the Nicene city under Constantine of divine memory, or a little while ago in Ephesus under our decree ('praeceptum'); but we commanded that only this be enacted at Ephesus, that all who disturb the holy churches with injurious harm be removed in a fitting manner."[30]

To Eudoxia, the emperor made clear that he was unwilling to reconsider the judgment issued by the synod:

> "Flavian of [holy] memory was removed from human affairs by a sacred judgment … It is impossible to define further what has already been decided once."[31]

All three letters were a defensive response to Leo's request that a new council be held in Italy.

From the language of orthodoxy that Theodosius adopted, Leo understood that he subscribed to the same variety of Nicene fundamentalism that would later drive the followers of Eutyches and Dioscorus to dissent from the definition of Chalcedon.[32] This was the variety that saw the basic truths of the Incarnation decisively expressed in the Nicene faith and in the early writings of Cyril, stating that Christ had one nature.[33] For these unreconstructed Cyrillians, any departure from the writings of Cyril, or from a literal interpretation of Nicaea, was thought to be inconsistent with orthodoxy. For Leo, however, their stubborn commitment to fundamentalism compromised the same the-

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[30] Leo, *Ep.* 63; *Epistula Theodosi rescripta ad Gallum Placidiam*. ACO II, 3, I, p. 16. 'His itaque litteris indicamus quoniam de his quae dicta sunt a reverendissimo episcopo plenius atque apertius saepius scriptum est: ex quibus sine dubitatione manifestum est nihil nos praeter paternam fidem, aut dogmata divina, vel definitiones reverendissimorum, qui tam sub divae memoriae Constantino in Nicaea civitate, quam dudum nostro praecepto in Epheso congregati sunt, definisse, aut decrevisse, aut intellexisse; sed hoc solum in Epheso constitui jussimus, ut omnes qui nocibili laesione Ecclesias sanctas turbaverunt, digne removerentur.'

[31] Leo, *Ep.* 64; *Epistula Theodosii rescripta ad Eudoxiam augustam*. ACO II, 3, I, p. 17.

[32] Wessel, *Cyril of Alexandria and the Nestorian Controversy*, pp. 283–286.

[33] Ibid., pp. 44, 71.

ological principles that they purported to uphold, by deposing Flavian and rejecting the two-nature christology to which he subscribed.[34] It is all the more striking, therefore, that his strategy was not to persuade the emperor to adopt the two-nature view, but rather to concede that the emperor vigilantly supported Nicaea by not permitting any deviation from it.[35] This ironic statement was a testament to Leo's skill in diplomacy. It was intended to placate the emperor and assure him that the apostolic see both approved of and acknowledged his commitment to orthodoxy. Though Leo must have found such attempts at doctrinal vigilance misguided and ill-informed, he, nonetheless, realized how deeply habituated the emperor was to his theological views. Disappointed by his failure, Leo never mentioned the matter again to any member of the Theodosian court.

What he may not have known was the reason that Theodosius was so willing to accept the tenets of Nicene fundamentalism. Theodosius had summoned the Council of Ephesus I in order to settle the christological controversy between Cyril of Alexandria and Nestorius of Constantinople. When the two parties they loosely represented, the Cyrillians and the Antiochenes, had failed to reach an agreement, they presented the emperor with two opposing conciliar decisions from which to choose. Although he had intended to leave the doctrinal discussions to the bishops, charging his imperial representative, Candidianus, with providing a suitable forum in which to examine the doctrine, he decided to intervene when the bishops failed to reach a consensus. During the post-conciliar discussions he organized a meeting at Chalcedon (431), where he urged them to find a common ground on which to settle the controversy.[36] When the parties finally agreed to what would later become a tentative reconciliation (the Formula of Reunion in 433), the emperor probably thought that the ecclesiastical crisis had been resolved satisfactorily.[37]

He was disappointed less that twenty years later when the controversy was revived by a resurgence of anti-Nestorian sentiment. Orthodox bishops, such as Flavian, who subscribed to the two-nature christology that was also the doctrine of the apostolic see, were falsely accused

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[34] See Leo, *Ep.* 90, Jaffé 470; *Epistula Leonis ad Marcianum augustum* (d. 26 m. Iun. a. 451). ACO II, 4, p. 48, in which Leo tells Marcian that what was established at Nicaea should not be reinterpreted by heretics.

[35] in a letter of 16 July 450. Leo, *Ep.* 69, Jaffé 452, *Epistula Leonis ad Theodosium augustum* (d. 16 m. Iul. a. 450). ACO II, 4, p. 30.

[36] Wessel, *Cyril of Alexandria and the Nestorian Controversy*, pp. 143, 145–146.

[37] Ibid., pp. 268–273.

of Nestorianism. Believing the accusations, Theodosius convened the Robber Synod in order to restore the church to his version of orthodoxy. The definitions of Ephesus I and Nicaea were confirmed, and such bishops as Flavian and Eusebius of Dorylaeum were condemned, whom Theodosius and Dioscorus thought promoted the Nestorian heresy. With only a slight understanding of the theological complexities involved in the doctrine of the Incarnation, and partly under the influence of the one-nature christology of Chrysaphius, the emperor was poised to believe Eutyches' charge that Flavian and his supporters had succumbed to the christology of Nestorius. When Leo petitioned the emperor to overturn the decisions of the Robber Synod, therefore, Theodosius feared that doing so might violate the Nicene orthodoxy that he had worked so hard to preserve eighteen years earlier.

Something else conspired to make him view Leo's request for a new council with suspicion. An event had taken place at the Hippodrome many years earlier in which the patrician and philosopher Cyrus, whom the emperor had made praetorian prefect and prefect of the city, was hailed by the people of Constantinople, who shouted, "Constantine founded, Cyrus restored. This is his place, Augustus." Theodosius understood these acclamations as the insult they were intended to be. Jealous of Cyrus, he falsely accused him of paganism, removed him from office, and confiscated his property.[38] From that moment on, Theodosius perhaps felt that he had to prove to the people of the city that he, not the well-loved Cyrus, was the new Constantine, and that he, as the unwavering defender of the same Nicene orthodoxy that Constantine had championed, should be hailed as his heir.[39]

In the light of the emperor's commitment to maintaining a strict, if controversial, interpretation of Nicaea, Leo decided that the most logical course of action was to turn his attention toward securing the orthodoxy of Flavian's successor to the see of Constantinople, Anatolius. (Flavian had already died as a result of the violent tactics used by the members of the Robber Synod.) Frustrated that he could not persuade Theodosius to reverse the decisions of the synod, he worked persistently to ensure that the new bishop of Constantinople acknowledged (i) the *Tome* to Flavian, (ii) the letter of Cyril to Nestorius on the Incarnation, and (iii) the definition and *florilegium* of the Council of Ephesus I

[38] See Priscus, in R.C. Blockley, *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians of the Later Roman Empire: Eunapius, Olympiodorus, Priscus, and Malchus* (Liverpool, 1981–1983), p. 235.

[39] Wessel, *Cyril of Alexandria and the Nestorian Controversy*, pp. 179–180, 285–286.

as orthodox statements of the faith. After reading these documents and subscribing to them, Anatolius was to "agree with all his heart to the views of the catholics, so that he may, without the slightest hesitation, declare in the presence of all the clergy and all the people, his sincere acknowledgment of the common faith."[40] Theodosius was then to send his public confession to Leo, by which he was to excommunicate those who held views of the Incarnation that differed from the profession of faith to which Leo and the catholics subscribed.[41] Only if some of the bishops and clergy did not subscribe to the view of orthodoxy contained in the documents listed above and promoted by the legates in Constantinople, was the emperor to hold a new council in Italy to resolve the doctrinal differences.[42] His new strategy, in other words, was to convene a council only after the opportunities for negotiation and reconciliation had been exhausted.

When Theodosius died in 450, the result of an accident, the major obstacle to Leo's plan for reconciling the eastern churches to Roman orthodoxy vanished. Marcian, an officer from Thrace, was elected emperor and Theodosius' sister Pulcheria became his wife. That the new emperor, like his wife, subscribed to the view that Christ had two natures made him much more congenial to convening a new council. He must have also been influenced by the petitions that had been made to Theodosius over the last several years. Whatever his motivation was, by Spring of 451 Marcian promised to grant two of Leo's requests, his first, to hold an ecumenical council, with the provision that it be held in the East, and his second, to honor the memory of Flavian by having his body returned to Constantinople for burial in the Basilica of the Apostles.[43] To redress the crimes committed against those bishops who had continued to subscribe to orthodoxy, Marcian held a preliminary synod in Constantinople, where it was decided that anyone who had been sent into exile for having supported Flavian would be returned to his see. Amid this flurry of activity, Anatolius subscribed to the *Tome*.

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[40] Leo, *Ep.* 69.1, Jaffé 452; *Epistula Leonis ad Theodosium augustum* (d. 16 m. Iul. a. 450). ACO II, 4, p. 31.

[41] Ibid. Leo, *Ep.* 69.2, Jaffé 452; ACO II, 4, p. 31.

[42] He made basically the same request of Pulcheria in *Ep.* 70, Jaffé 453, asking for her help. *Epistula Leonis ad Pulcheriam augustam* (d. 16 m. Iul. a. 450). ACO II, 4, p. 31.

[43] Leo, *Ep.* 76; *Epistula Marciani imperatoris ad Leonem papam* (d. 22 m. Sept. a. 450). ACO II, 3, I, p. 18.

Leo credited Pulcheria with this progress rather than her husband, thanking her profusely in a letter four times as long as the one he sent to Marcian. Ascribing his hard-won victories to her influence was both a strategic ploy to secure his status in the eastern court and a sincere acknowledgment of her political clout.[44] It was not until several months later (June 451) that he also recognized the efforts of Marcian: "[W]hen I received your letter I found great cause for thanksgiving, because I have learnt that you are most eager for the peace of the church."[45] He needed the cooperation of both of them in order to build a network that was capable of shaping the affairs of the Constantinople see. To that end, Pulcheria was to develop a good relationship with Julian of Cios, the papal legate residing in Constantinople, and with the clergy there who had remained loyal to Flavian. It was through that base of support that she was poised to influence Anatolius, whom Leo had asked to restore the former Eutychians who had since corrected their theological views. The help of Marcian was also enlisted by urging him to tell Anatolius to consult with Rome.[46]

Leo applied this same strategy of indirect persuasion in setting the agenda for the new council. Through the legates whom he dispatched to Constantinople, whose job it was to explicate his message, he informed Marcian of what he thought was relevant to the proceedings.[47] The new council was not to be used as an opportunity to investigate doctrine that had already been established:

> It is, however, most unjust that through the folly of a few we should be called back to conjectural opinions and the warfare of sinful disputes, as if deliberation were necessary, with a renewal of contention, as to whether Eutyches held impious opinions and whether a wrong judgement was delivered by Dioscorus, who in condemning Flavian of holy

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[44] Leo, *Ep.* 79.1, Jaffé 459; *Epistula Leonis ad Pulcheriam augustam* (d. 13 m. Apr. a. 451). ACO II, 4, p. 37. Leo wished "therefore, to jump for joy and to fulfil appropriate vows to God for your clemency's prosperity, for he has already bestowed on you a double palm and crown through all parts of the world where the gospel of the Lord is preached." Translation in trans. R. Price, M. Gaddis, *The acts of the Council of Chalcedon* (Liverpool, 2005), vol. 1, p. 95.

[45] Leo, *Ep.* 82.1, Jaffé 462; *Epistula Leonis ad Marcianum augustum* (d. 23 m. Apr. a. 451). ACO II, 4, p. 41. Translation in trans. Price, Gaddis, *The acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, vol. 1, p. 97.

[46] in a letter dispatched 9 June 451. Leo, *Ep.* 83, Jaffé 463; *Epistula Leonis ad Marcianum augustum* (d. 9 m. Iun. a. 451). ACO II, 4, pp. 42–43.

[47] Leo, *Ep.* 82.2, Jaffé 462; *Epistula Leonis ad Marcianum augustum* (d. 23 m. Apr. a. 451). ACO II, 4, p. 41.

> memory laid himself low and drove some of the more naive headlong to the same destruction.[48]

It was rather to confine its inquiry to disciplinary matters, determining who among the lapsed should be welcomed into the churches and who should be excluded. This attempt to circumscribe the scope of the proceedings probably veiled Leo's private wish that the council, which had been moved to the East where he could only provisionally control it, not be held at all.

Only two months later (9 June 451), Leo's anxiety concerning the political situation in the western provinces was palpable. He told Marcian that it would be impossible for all the bishops to attend the council in the light of the exigent political circumstances ('temporis necessitas').[49] Because Marcian and Pulcheria had already taken significant steps to restore orthodoxy, the idea of holding a council seemed less urgent to Leo. And because he feared that a new assembly of bishops might debate and even sanction views that were opposed to Rome's, he requested in writing and verbally through his legates that the council be delayed.[50] The legates failed to convince Marcian, however, who decided that an ecumenical council would be held at Nicaea in the coming months.[51] Having lost the argument, Leo did not continue to pursue it, but merely reminded the emperor that he had obediently conceded the new council, even though he would have preferred its postponement.[52] (He never missed an opportunity to ingratiate himself with the imperial court.) Unable to attend the council, but still anxious to influence its outcome, he told Marcian and Pulcheria that he would send his legates, Paschasinus and Basil, accompanied by Boni-

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[48] Ibid. Translation in trans. Price, Gaddis, *The acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, vol. 1, p. 97. 'Nimis autem iniquum est ut per paucorum insipientiam ad conjecturas opinionum et ad carnalium disputationum bella revocemur, tamquam reparata disceptatione tractandum sit utrum Eutyches impie senserit et utrum perverse Dioscorus judicarit, qui in sanctae memoriae Flaviani condemnatione se perculit.'

[49] Leo, *Ep.* 83, Jaffé 463; *Epistula Leonis ad Marcianum augustum* (d. 9 m. Iun. a. 451). ACO II, 4, p. 43.

[50] Leo, *Epp.* 83, 84, Jaffé 463, 464; ACO II, 4, pp. 42–43; *Epistula Leonis ad Pulcheriam augustam* (d. 9 m. Iun. a. 451). ACO II, 4, pp. 43–44.

[51] Of course, Marcian later moved the proceedings to Chalcedon.

[52] Leo, *Epp.* 89, 90, 94, Jaffé 469, 470, 474; *Epistula Leonis ad Marcianum augustum* (d. 24 m. Iun. 451). ACO II, 4, pp. 47–48; *Epistula Leonis ad Marcianum augustum* (d. 26 m. Iun. a. 451). ACO II, 4, p. 48; *Epistula Leonis ad Marcianum augustum* (d. 20 m. Iul. a. 451). ACO II, 4, pp. 49–50.

face and Julian of Cios, to represent his interests.[53] They were to carry with them a letter he had written prescribing orthodoxy, by which they were to protect the established ecclesiastical law and doctrine, but not to impose it harshly: "For, as I have very frequently written from the start of the affair, I have wanted such moderation to be observed in the midst of discordant views and sinful jealousies that, while indeed no excisions or additions to the completeness of the faith should be permitted, yet the remedy of forgiveness ('remedium veniae') should be granted to those returning to unity and peace."[54] By subscribing to a principle of moderation that few would quarrel with, applying it even to those who had been responsible for the debacle that was the Robber Synod, he assumed a measure of control over the conciliar process.

2. *Enlisting the help of the bishops*

The instructions Leo gave to the bishops attending the council were more explicit than those he gave to the imperial court. They were to use the *Tome* as the standard of orthodoxy, which "declared most fully and lucidly what is the pious and pure confession of the mystery of the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ," a christological statement consistent with "gospel authority, the prophetic sayings, and the apostolic teaching."[55] He was concerned, however, that condemning the single-nature doctrine of Eutyches, as the *Tome* required, might give the Nestorians a false sense of having secured a doctrinal victory. "Let there, however, remain in force what was decreed specifically against Nestorius at the earlier council of Ephesus, at which Bishop Cyril of holy memory then presided, lest the impiety then condemned should derive any comfort from the fact that Eutyches is being struck down by a condign execration."[56] His strategy was that renewing the canons

[53] Leo, *Epp.* 89, 94, 95.1, Jaffé 469, 474, 475; ACO II, 4, pp. 47, 49–50; *Epistula Leonis ad Pulcheriam augustam* (d. 20 m. Iul. a. 451). ACO II, 4, p. 50.

[54] Leo, *Ep.* 95.2, Jaffé 475; ACO II, 4, pp. 50–51. Translation in trans. Price, Gaddis, *The acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, vol. 1, p. 105. Although they were not allowed to hold the same honor that they once had, such persons would be permitted to retain their sees and their rank as bishops.

[55] Leo, *Ep.* 93.2, Jaffé 473; *Epistula Leonis ad concilium Chalcedonense* (*synodum Nicaeae constitutam*) (c. 26 m. Iun. a. 451). ACO II, 4, p. 52; Translation in trans. Price, Gaddis, *The acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, vol. 1, p. 104.

[56] Leo, *Ep.* 93.3, Jaffé 473; ACO II, 4, p. 52. Translation in trans. Price, Gaddis, *The acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, vol. 1, p. 104. 'Prioris autem Ephesenae synodi,

against Nestorius might prevent such a misappropriation of the new council's decrees. Persuaded by this reasoning, the conciliar bishops eventually followed his advice, explicitly acknowledging the authority he had inherited through the succession of bishops that was the apostolic see: "This knowledge, descending to us like a golden chain by order of the Enactor, you have yourself preserved, being for all the interpreter of the voice of the blessed Peter, and bringing down on all the blessing of his faith."[57] Through that acknowledgment they also came to interpret the events of the Robber Synod in the manner in which Leo intended: Dioscorus had violated the canons when he deposed Flavian and Eusebius and acquitted Eutyches, a result he obtained when he threatened with physical violence those who refused to subscribe to his heresy.

This was similar to the story that Flavian and Eusebius had presented to Leo. Condemned by the eastern bishops and by Illyricum in what purported to be an ecumenical synod, they had both, in their desperation, filed a formal appeal. We know from Flavian's first letter to Leo (late 448), however, that he was not truly convinced that Rome was, in all circumstances, the final arbiter in matters of doctrine. Had he viewed Rome as the ultimate judge, he would have consulted with Leo, seeking his advice. Instead, he had merely informed him of what had already taken place at the synod in Constantinople: that Eutyches, in his revival of the Valentinian and Apollinarian heresy, would not confess that Christ had two natures after the Incarnation or that the flesh of Christ was of the same substance as that of ordinary human beings. Attached to the letter were the synodal minutes of the trial confirming this statement, that Leo "may deem it worthy to make known [Eutyches'] impiety to all the God-living bishops who are under his jurisdiction."[58] Leo's role, according to Flavian, was to publicize the results of the synod. In none of his letters did Flavian ever ask him to judge its doctrinal decisions.

Leo perceived his role differently. He did not intend simply to announce the findings of the synod, as Flavian asked him to do, but to

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cui sanctae memoriae episcopus Cyrillus tunc praesedit, contra Nestorium specialiter statuta permaneant, ne tunc damnata impietas ideo sibi in aliquo blandiatur, quia Eutyches justa exsecratione percellitur.'

[57] Leo, *Ep.* 98.1; *Epistula concilii Chalcedonensis ad Leonem*. ACO II, 3, 2, p. 93. Translation in trans. Price, Gaddis, *The acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, vol. 3, p. 121.

[58] Leo, *Ep.* 22.4; *Epistula Flaviani CPolitani ad Leonem papam*. ACO II, 2, I, p. 22.

judge Eutyches' orthodoxy.[59] Because he had not received sufficient information from Flavian to conduct such an examination, he was unwilling to rule on the condemnation: "[Hasten] to tell us everything as fully and clearly as possible (as ought to have been done before), lest, amid the partisan assertions, we be misled by some uncertainty, and the dissension that should have been stamped out in its origins might instead be fostered."[60] Some months later (Spring 449), Flavian acquiesced in Leo's demands, providing him with the additional information he required. Just in case Leo might be tempted to find Eutyches innocent, Flavian informed him that Eutyches had also set out to violate the canons, thereby appealing to a Roman sensibility that was firmly committed to maintaining the ecclesiastical law and discipline.[61]

Only after the circumstances had changed and Flavian concluded that he himself had been convicted in an unjust trial did he openly acknowledge the authority of Rome to overturn an ecclesiastical conviction. "It is indeed appropriate at the present time to send a further reference to your holiness, as an apostolic appeal, that should you visit the East there might be an offer of help for the pious faith of the holy fathers, which is imperiled… Indeed, everything is unsettled, the laws of the church are broken, the faith is destroyed."[62] Because Eutyches had similarly viewed Leo as the final authority in matters of ecclesiastical doctrine and discipline, he appealed to him in December 448 for protection from what he considered to be an unjust attack upon his orthodoxy:[63] "I take refuge in you, therefore, the defender of religion and despiser of such factions, while introducing even now nothing strange against the faith that was originally handed down to us."[64] By

[59] Leo, *Ep.* 23, Jaffé 420; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Flavianum CPolitanum* (d. 18 m. Febr. a. 449). ACO II, 4, pp. 4–5.

[60] Leo, *Ep.* 23.2, Jaffé 420; ACO II, 4, p. 5; see also *Fathers of the Church*, p. 88. 'quam plenissime et lucide universa nobis, quod ante facere debuit, indicare festinet, ne inter assertiones partium aliqua ambiguitate fallamur et dissensio, quae in suis initiis abolenda est, nutriatur.'

[61] Leo, *Ep.* 26; *Epistula Flaviani CPolitani ad Leonem papam*. ACO II, 2, I, pp. 23–24.

[62] *Flaviani libellus appellationis ad Leonem papam*. ACO II, 2, I, p. 77. 'Oportunum quidem ad praesens tempus mediocriter referre et uti apostolica appellatione ad vestram sanctitatem, ut progrediens ad Orientem auxilium ferret periclitanti piae sanctorum patrum fidei … ecce enim confusa sunt omnia, solutae sunt ecclesiasticae ordinationes, perierunt ea quae sunt fidei.'

[63] Leo was receptive. Having heard only Eutyches' point of view, he was grateful for having been informed that the Nestorian heresy was on the rise once again. Leo, *Ep.* 20, 1 June 448, *Ad notitiam nostram*, Jaffé 418.

[64] Leo, *Ep.* 21.3; *Libellus appellationis ad Leonem papam*. ACO II, 4, p. 144.

this time, charges of heresy had already been filed against him, and the archimandrites of the monasteries had been asked to subscribe to his condemnation.[65]

Surprisingly, Eutyches also appealed to Peter Chrysologus, perhaps mistakenly thinking that Chrysologus, as the bishop of Ravenna, the city where the Western imperial family was (incorrectly) thought to reside, had the authority to intervene in such cases. Chrysologus was unreceptive: Eutyches was to stop discussing the Incarnation, the statute of limitations for which had passed within thirty years of Christ's death: "Human laws remove human questions [from legal consideration] within thirty years: the birth of Christ, which was written in divine law and cannot be expressed in words, is [now] after so many centuries being tossed about in reckless disputes."[66] Furthermore, as a north Italian bishop under the purview of the apostolic see and deferential to its authority, Chrysologus was not authorized to hear such cases without the consent of the bishop of Rome, to whose letters he referred him.

Just as Eutyches had done before him, Flavian documented the injustice of his condemnation by relating to Leo the events that had taken place at the Robber Synod: that when it began, Dioscorus prevented its members from reading the definition of Nicaea, and Flavian and his co-bishops at the synod of Constantinople from participating in the proceedings;[67] that after Eutyches presented his case and filed his written charge against Flavian, Dioscorus pronounced him orthodox and restored him to communion;[68] that the synod condemned Flavian for violating the canon from the Council of Ephesus making it an ecclesiastical offense to overturn what had already been decided there; and that Flavian, after appealing to the apostolic see and to the general council that meets regularly in Rome, was surrounded by soldiers who tried to drag him from the church.[69] His only explanation for the injustices committed against him was that Dioscorus must have been harboring the same personal grudge he had expressed earlier when he failed to

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[65] Leo, *Ep.* 21.2; ACO II, 4, p. 144. (See their signatures attached to the condemnation of Eutyches by the synod of Constantinople.)

[66] Leo, *Ep.* 25.1; *Epistula Petri Ep. Ravennensis ad Eutychem*, ACO II, 3, I, p. 6. 'Triginta annis humanae leges humanas adimunt questiones: Christi generatio, quae divina lege scribitur inenarrabilis, post tot saecula disputatione temeraria ventilatur.'

[67] *Flaviani libellus appellationis ad Leonem papam*. ACO II, 2, I, pp. 77–78.

[68] Ibid., p. 78. There was never a formal charge filed against Flavian, who claimed to have been taken by surprise.

[69] Ibid.

send to Flavian the Paschal letters that the Alexandrian church customarily sent to all the churches of Egypt and to the principal churches beyond.[70]

The acts of the Robber Synod suggest a slightly different version of the events. After the conciliar members were seated in the church, there is no evidence that Dioscorus threatened Flavian with violence, as he claimed in his appeal.[71] Nor does the record show that at this early stage in the proceedings Dioscorus prevented Flavian and his supporters from participating in the council. But as one conciliar member at the trial of Eutyches, Aetius, acknowledged, notaries do not necessarily record everything that is said at councils.[72] That the recording of conciliar proceedings was a notoriously partisan affair further suggests that the existing record of it might not be accurate. It is significant in this regard that the acts of the Robber Synod were integrated into the acts of the Council of Chalcedon, which so many of the bishops persecuted by Dioscorus attended. Chalcedon would not have strategically omitted such acts of violence from its record, because the bishops there were generally intent on condemning Dioscorus. They would have surely stated any discrepancies in the record that favored Flavian's version of the story. It is more likely that in his haste to write to Leo, Flavian simply recounted the events so as to make his case persuasive. Much of his report is, nonetheless, consistent with what the acts record, especially the claim that Dioscorus resorted to physical violence when he forced many of the bishops to subscribe to his heresy. Of his own treatment by Dioscorus, Flavian said, "Amid the great confusion that was taking place I barely managed to flee to a certain place in the church, where I hid with my companions, not without being watched, however, in case I wished to report to you all the wrongs that have been committed against me."[73] To redress those wrongs, Flavian asked Leo to issue a decree ('dare formam') that a new ecumenical synod be convened, with bishops participating from both the eastern and western churches, in order to overturn the judgments of the Robber Synod and to restore him as the bishop of Constantinople.

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[70] Ibid., p. 77.

[71] *Chalced.* (451) *Gesta*, *Actio* I (d. 8 m. Oct. a. 451) (*de Dioscoro*) ACO II, I, I, p. 82.

[72] Ibid., p. 173.

[73] *Flaviani libellus appellationis*, ACO II, 2, I, p. 78. 'tunc tumultu plurimo facto vix potui ad quendam locum ecclesiae confugere et ibi cum his qui mecum erant, latere, non tamen sine custodia, ne valeam universa mala quae erga me commissa sunt, ad vos referre.'

Flavian also requested that Leo act as his advocate by writing letters to the imperial court, to the clergy and people of Constantinople, to the monks, and to such bishops as Juvenal of Jerusalem and others who conspired with Dioscorus against him. Leo did not fully comply. We know from his letter to Theodosius (13 October 449) that it was not because he failed to receive Flavian's appeal. Hilary, Leo's representative at the council, had delivered it after he escaped from the synod.[74] It was Flavian's *strategy* that Leo disapproved of. The only letters Leo wrote were to the eastern imperial family, the archimandrites and clergy at Constantinople, his papal legate Julian of Cios, and Anastasius of Thessaloniki, informing them that Flavian had been treated unjustly.[75] The individual bishops whom Flavian named, all of whom had opposed him at the council, including Juvenal bishop of Jerusalem, Thalassius of Cappadocian Casesarea, Stephen of Ephesus, Eusebius of Ancyra, and Cyrus of Aphrodisias, probably never received letters from Leo. The only letter on this issue that he addressed to an individual bishop other than to Flavian himself was the one he sent to Anastasius of Thessaloniki, congratulating him for not being present at the synod. From the epistolary evidence we learn, therefore, that Leo supported Flavian mainly by appealing to those whom he had already incorporated into his political network, rather than by reproaching the bishops at the synod who had deposed Flavian.

Eusebius of Dorylaeum also filed a formal appeal with Leo. In doing so he was part of a broader trend, in which bishops, clergy, and monks were, during the preceding two years (449 to 451), doggedly appealing their cases to Rome. In addition to the written appeals filed by Eutyches, Flavian, and Eusebius, the priests Basil and John traveled to Rome to defend themselves against charges of Nestorianism and Eutychianism. They succeeded. Having endured the toils of a long trip, Leo told Anatolius that they revealed their hearts to the apostolic see, condemning the heresies of Eutyches and Nestorius.[76] Theodoret, the bishop of Cyrrhus, also appealed his condemnation to the apostolic see because he, too, wanted to prove to Leo that his views were consistent with orthodoxy. Displaying his deference to the authority of Rome, he

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[74] Leo, *Ep.* 44.1, Jaffé 438; *Epistula Leonis et sanctae synodi ad Theodosium augustum* (d. 13 m. Oct. a. 449). ACO II, 4, p. 19.

[75] Leo, *Epp.* 43 (Jaffé 437), 44 (Jaffé 438), 45 (Jaffé 439), 47 (Jaffé 440), 48 (Jaffé 441), 49 (Jaffé 442), 50 (Jaffé 443), 51 (Jaffé 444), all in the same post, dated 13 October 449.

[76] Leo, *Ep.* 87, Jaffé 467; *Epistula Leonis ad Anatolium CPolitanum* (d. 14 m. Iun. a. 451). ACO II, 4, p. 45. This happened sometime before 9 June 451.

asked whether he should submit to the judgment of the Robber Synod against him: "I await the verdict of your apostolic see and pray and implore that your holiness support me when I appeal to your upright and just tribunal and bid me come to you in order to show that my teaching follows in the footsteps of the apostles."[77] Like Theodoret, Eusebius in his cry for help fully acknowledged the appellate authority of the Roman see to judge his orthodoxy. "[F]rom the beginning, the apostolic throne has been accustomed to defend those who suffer wrong, to aid those who fall into the inevitable factions, and to raise up the prostrate according to the measure of [its] power."[78] He was the one who had instigated the controversy with Eutyches, filing charges against him with the standing synod in Constantinople when he learned that Eutyches had persuaded some of the monks living there to subscribe to the controversial view that Christ had one nature after the Incarnation.[79] Twenty years earlier, Eusebius had also charged Nestorius with heresy, igniting that controversy as well.[80] Unlike Flavian, though, he had worked as a lawyer before becoming bishop,[81] a skill he used to his advantage in composing the formal pleadings for his ecclesiastical actions, which inevitably charged his theological opponents with heresy whenever he thought that orthodoxy was being compromised. Those skills were evident in the new document he filed with Leo. Establishing the legal grounds for his appeal, Eusebius said that Dioscorus had wrongfully excluded him from the proceedings of the Robber Synod, even though Flavian and the papal legates had formally requested three times for him to appear.[82]

Not only had ecclesiastical due process been violated, but it had been violated by force when Eusebius had been physically prevented from entering the synod:

> Dioscorus, the most religious bishop of the city of Alexandria, who directed everything as Eutyches desired, … prohibited me from entering, being supported in this injustice by officers of the law ('satellites'), the honorable men who were commissioned by the most religious emper-

[77] Leo, *Ep.* 52.5, end 449; Theodoret of Cyrrhus, *Ep.* 113, *Théodoret de Cyr. Correspondance*, *SC* 111 (Paris, 1965), v. 3, p. 64.

[78] *Eusebii libellus appellationis ad Leonem papam.* ACO II, 2, I, p. 79. 'ab exordio consuevit thronus apostolicus iniqua perferentes defensare et eos qui in inevitabiles factiones inciderunt, adiuuare et humi iacentes erigere secundum possibilitatem quam habetis.'

[79] Ibid.

[80] Wessel, *Cyril of Alexandria and the Nestorian Controversy*, pp. 219–220.

[81] *Eusebii libellus appellationis ad Leonem papam.* ACO II, 2, I, p. 80.

[82] Ibid.

> ors to protect the synod; [these same men] kept me under guard in the church, where the synod was held, with a group of soldiers, who stood within the synod, their swords drawn, threatening with death, at the bidding of the most learned Dioscorus, those who subscribed to religion ('religiose sentiebant'); and the aforesaid Dioscorus permitted an ignorant ('inperitus') group of lay people whom he admitted into the synod to assail with abusive words the most religious bishops; and he threatened to have some of the most religious bishops thrown into the sea should anyone venture to oppose his impious decrees.[83]

Threatened with violence and intimidated by soldiers, Eusebius was excluded on the pretense that he, as the prosecutor of Eutyches, had already fulfilled his obligations to the synod when he tried and condemned Eutyches in the standing synod at Constantinople.[84] The efficient lawyer that he was, Eusebius offered two legal grounds on which Leo could plausibly overturn his condemnation and restore him to his bishopric and to communion with Rome: (i) he was orthodox, because he subscribed to the Councils of Nicaea and Ephesus and to the decrees of Cyril, and he had never received a condemnation from Rome; and (ii) the proceedings against him were irregular, because the bishops unjustly excluded him from the synod and threatened him with physical harm.[85] Leo was so moved by Eusebius' plea that he restored him to communion and later gave him protection in Rome.[86]

Flavian had been less fortunate. He had died sometime in July 449, either due to the injuries inflicted upon him by Dioscorus and his party at the council, or to the poor treatment he received from them while traveling to his place of exile.[87] Nearly two years passed before Leo resumed correspondence with the see of Constantinople. In the meantime, Theodosius had died (in 450), Marcian was installed as emperor, and Anatolius was elected bishop. As the new bishop, he announced his communion with Rome by holding a synod in Constantinople at which

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[83] Ibid.

[84] Ibid., pp. 80–81; confirmed by the testimony of Elpidios in *Chalced. (451) Gesta*, *Actio I*, ACO II, I, I, p. 97.

[85] Ibid.

[86] Leo, *Ep.* 79.3, Jaffé 459. *Epistula Leonis ad Pulcheriam augustam* (d. 13 m. Apr. a. 451). ACO II, 4, p. 38. Pulcheria was in the meantime to keep watch over the church.

[87] Cf. Leo, *Ep.* 38, Jaffé 432; *Epistula Leonis ad Flavianum CPolitanum* (d. 23 m. Iul. a. 449). ACO II, 4, pp. 18–19. Leo writes to Flavian and wants to know why he has received no reply. Flavian has most surely died by the time Leo writes again, 11 August 449. *Ep.* 39 (Jaffé 433) is a letter of consolation to him. *Epistula Leonis ad Flavianum CPolitanum* (d. 11 m. Aug. a. 449). ACO II, 4, p. 18.

those present subscribed to the *Tome*.[88] Congenial to Roman orthodoxy, this synodal decision had probably been orchestrated by Marcian and Pulcheria, who were openly devoted to the two-nature christology that the *Tome* reflected. No matter who initiated the synod, Leo was pleased with the result. He formally ratified its proceedings in a document that he attached to his letter (13 April 451) welcoming Anatolius into communion.[89] Gratified that he had confessed to orthodoxy, Leo swiftly made several demands upon him: he was to reach an agreement with the papal delegates such that those who repented would be in communion with Rome; to honor the orthodoxy of Flavian, the names of his opponents at the Robber Synod, Dioscorus, Juvenal, and Eustathius, were not to be read at the altar; and those who had condemned Flavian indirectly by assenting to the crime of another, were to remain in communion with only their current churches.

So far as Leo was concerned, the most urgent problem facing Anatolius was that of either rejecting from, or receiving into, the churches those who had participated in Flavian's unjust condemnation.[90] To assist with the problem of readmitting the lapsed, Leo sent two legates, Lucentius and Basil, who were charged with facilitating his instructions. Working together with the papal legates, Anatolius was to receive into communion those who had subscribed, under the threat of violence, to the Robber Synod, provided, of course, that they agreed to anathematize Eutyches, his doctrine, and his followers. "[Those who], conquered by fear and overwhelmed with terror, were able to be coerced into assenting to the most wicked judgment and who [now] desire to obtain catholic communion, are to be granted the peace of the brethren upon their repentance."[91] Leo assigned to the apostolic see the task of determining whether those who repented for their participation in Fla-

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[88] *Fathers of the Church*, p. 148. Leo's legates were there in Constantinople for a different reason—to test Anatolius' orthodoxy. But while they were there, they attended the synod. See Ibid., p. 139, n. 7.

[89] Leo, *Ep.* 80.1, Jaffé 460; *Epistula Leonis ad Anatolium CPolitanum* (d. 13 m. Apr. a. 451). ACO II, 4, p. 39. I assume that this document was attached to the letter in which Leo gave his approval to the order of proceedings that he had received, ratified with the necessary signatures.

[90] Leo, *Ep.* 85.1, Jaffé 465; *Epistula Leonis ad Anatolium CPolitanum* (d. 9 m. Iun. a. 451). ACO II, 4, pp. 44–45. He thus sent another letter nearly two months later (9 June 451) with further instructions on the matter.

[91] Leo, *Ep.* 85.1, Jaffé 465; ACO II, 4, p. 44. 'se metu victos et terrore superatos ad consensum scelestissimi judicii potuisse compelli et communionem catholicam optinere desiderant, satisfactioni eorum pax fraterna praestetur.'

vian's condemnation should be forgiven and reinstated in the church. His legates in Constantinople were to oversee the actions of Anatolius, reserving for Leo jurisdiction over the most difficult cases. Both actions effectively placed the see of Constantinople in a kind of receivership, revealing, for the first of many times, how greatly Leo mistrusted its bishop.

Leo expected very little political support from the clergy and monks of Constantinople, writing to them simple letters of consolation, congratulation, and dogmatic instruction, unencumbered by the urge to persuade them. Unlike Cyril of Alexandria's strategy with the monks and people of Constantinople during the Nestorian controversy some twenty years before, whom he viewed as agents capable of shaping the opinion of the imperial court and see,[92] Leo's relationship with the clergy and monks was that of a universal pastor ministering to his flock. He wrote to the archimandrites of Constantinople (13 June 449), acknowledging their devotion to the faith and urging their commitment to the *Tome*: "What our opinion is, [which is drawn] from the tradition of the fathers, concerning the mystery of great piety in which we obtain our justification and redemption through the Incarnation of the Word of God, has now been sufficiently explained, as I judge it, in the letter I have sent to my brother Flavian, the bishop."[93] One year later, he congratulated and consoled Faustus and Martinus, archimandrites of Constantinople, for subscribing to orthodoxy, for spreading it among their followers, and for adhering to the instructions given by his legates. They had learned how intolerable it was, said Leo, that certain men, misconstruing the doctrine of the Incarnation, had undermined the theological basis for redemption.[94] In his letter to the people of Constantinople (13 October 449) he offered reassurance, urging their continuing devotion amid the terrible events that had taken place at the Robber Synod, where bishops had been compelled by the threat of physical harm to subscribe to the condemnation of the orthodox Flavian.[95]

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[92] Wessel, *Cyril of Alexandria and the Nestorian Controversy*, pp. 82–83, 164, 262.

[93] Leo, *Ep.* 32, Jaffé 426; *Epistula Leonis ad Faustum et Martinum presbyteros et reliquos archimandritas* (d. 13 m. Iun. a. 449). ACO II, 4, p. 12 'De sacramento autem pietatis magnae, in qua nobis per incarnationem verbi dei iustificatio est et redemptio, quae sit nostra ex patrum traditione sententia, in litteris quas ad fratrem meum Flavianum episcopum misi, nunc sufficienter, quantem arbitror, explicatum est.'

[94] Leo, *Epp.* 72 (Jaffé 455), 74 (Jaffé 456), and 75 (Jaffé 457).

[95] Leo, *Ep.* 50, Jaffé 443; *Epistula Leonis ad clerum CPolitanum* (d. 13 m. Oct. a. 449). ACO II, 4, pp. 21–22. In his dogmatic letter (*Ep.* 59, Jaffé 447) to the clergy and people of Constantinople, he explained the Roman view of the Incarnation and congratulated

Shortly after the Council of Chalcedon met in the Fall of 451, its members informed Leo that they had deposed Dioscorus for his actions at the Robber Synod, for rejecting the *Tome*, and for excommunicating Leo,[96] and Eutyches for refusing their three requests to attend the council. In reaching these judgments, the conciliar bishops ostensibly permitted the apostolic see, through the agency of its legates, to exercise a leading role at the council, thereby acknowledging the special authority of Rome to influence ecclesiastical law and doctrine. "We too, taking for our benefit you as our guide in the good, have displayed to the children of the church the inheritance and destiny of Truth."[97]

Their motives for attributing such wide-reaching powers to the apostolic see were less than straightforward. The conciliar bishops intended not only to underscore their common vision of a unified church, but to use that vision to flatter the pope in order to win his approval for the expansive jurisdictional privileges they had conferred upon the see of Constantinople.

them for their pious acclamations that had been brought to his attention. *Epistula Leonis papae ad cives CPolitanos* (m. Mart. a. 450). ACO II, 4, pp. 34–37.

[96] Leo, *Ep.* 98.2; *Epistula concilii Chalcedonensis ad Leonem*. ACO II, 3, 2, p. 94.

[97] Leo, *Ep.* 98.1; ACO II, 3, 2, p. 93. 'Unde et nos quippe ut inchoatore bonorum te ad utilitatem utentes, Ecclesiae filiis haereditatem sortemque veritatis ostendimus.' Translation in trans. Price, Gaddis, *The acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, vol. 1, p. 121.

CHAPTER SIX

THE ELABORATION OF THE ROMAN PRIMACY

1. *The idea of apostolic succession and the primacy of Rome*[1]

The privileges that Rome claimed were not an attempt to subject the patriarchal sees to Roman domination. In its origins, the idea of the Roman primacy responded to the proliferation of teachings that were thought to fall outside the sphere of orthodoxy.[2] When such Christians as the Montanists and the gnostics entered mainstream communities in the second century, they brought with them texts, apocryphal gospels that differed greatly from the gospels that were eventually to be included among the books that formed the canon.[3] From these differing interpretations of Scripture, the question that emerged was not only, "How should Scripture be interpreted," but also, "Who had the authority to interpret it?"[4]

During the neo-Arian controversy of the fourth century, problems of scriptural interpretation also came to the foreground of doctrinal debates when such defenders of Nicene orthodoxy as Athanasius and Basil of Caesarea, among others, confronted the neo-Arians on their own terms. Since these opponents of Nicaea had found plausible evidence from Scripture to support their doctrinal views, a method of

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[1] On the principle of apostolicity, see F. Dvornik, *Byzantium and the Roman Primacy* (New York, 1979), pp. 40–58; A. Michel, "Der Kampf um das politische oder petrinische Princip der Kirchenführung," in eds. A. Grillmeier, H. Bacht, *Das Konzil von Chalkedon* (Wurzburg, 1951), pp. 500–524.

[2] See generally, J.F. McCue, "The Roman primacy in the second century and the problem of the development of dogma," *Theological Studies* 25 (1964), pp. 161–196.

[3] The Montanists were a schismatic sect named for its leader Montanus, an ecstatic prophet of the mid-to late-second century. The Gnostics were a syncretist religious movement that believed its members were spiritual beings trapped in this evil world, who were to escape to the world of spirit.

[4] That is not to say that the confrontation with the gnostics avoided the exegetical questions that they raised, only that the questions were also addressed by developing ideas about apostolic authority and the rule of faith. See e.g., H. von Campenhausen, *The Formation of the Christian Bible* (Philadelphia, 1972), pp. 182–183: The content of the faith, as Irenaeus saw it, was alive in the church from its beginning.

interpretation was articulated that responded consistently to each of their theological claims, but that retained the fluidity to address additional claims that might arise later. The method considered the broader context of interpretation in which the doctrinal pronouncements had been made and inferred from it the teaching that was consistent with orthodoxy. The more far-reaching and controversial claim was that only the orthodox had the insight to establish in what that context consisted.

More than a century before Athanasius and others developed this method of interpretation, Tertullian (d. c. 225) decided that scriptural exegesis was too ambiguous an enterprise to make it the battleground on which to confront heretics. The slipperiness of scriptural interpretation made victory impossible, he suggested,

> for even if discussion from the Scriptures avoided placing each side on a par, the order of things would [still] require that this be proposed first, which is now the only thing that needs to be addressed: with whom lies that very faith? to whom do the Scriptures belong? from what and through whom, and when, and to whom has been handed down that discipline ('disciplina') by which people become Christians? For wherever it will be apparent that the truth of the Christian discipline and faith resides, there will be the truth of the Scriptures and the expositions of them, and of all the Christian traditions.[5]

The lack of a clearly defined method of interpretation that was rooted in orthodoxy suggested to Tertullian that his opponents had every reason to claim that they, too, had insight into Scripture. To dismiss such claims as illegitimate and to authorize only the interpretations that the orthodox made, he suggested that the repository of true doctrine was the apostolic churches whose seat was Rome.[6] They alone had the authority to interpret Scripture.

The first major expression of this idea appeared in the late second century in the major extant work by Irenaeus (fl. 180), *Adversus Haereses*, a reasoned and thorough refutation of the gnostic Christians who were insinuating themselves into his community in Lyon. What was new with Irenaeus was not the view that the orthodox were the only legitimate exegetes of Scripture, or that the apostolic churches were the protectors

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[5] Tertullian, *De praescriptione haereticorum*, 19, PL 2, 31; see S.K. Ray, *Upon this Rock: St. Peter and the Primacy of Rome in Scripture and the Early Church* (San Francisco, 1999), which I found useful for its collection of sources, many of which are duplicated in other source collections.

[6] Ibid. 21, 36, PL 2, 33, 49.

of orthodoxy. What was new was the suggestion that only the orthodox tradition had been transmitted, uninterrupted, by the apostles Peter and Paul to the Roman church.[7] The tradition was older than, and for that reason, Irenaeus argued, preferable to, that being promulgated by the gnostics, having been described previously in a letter of Clement to the Corinthians, which said that the tradition of the church was the apostolic tradition and that the Father of the Lord Christ was preached by the churches.[8] Both claims contradicted what the gnostics were saying. To ensure that this apostolic tradition had been maintained legitimately, Irenaeus articulated a theory of apostolic succession, in which the current bishop of Rome was linked through an unbroken chain of succession to Peter and Paul. In a culture whose claims to truth were bound by such traditions, it is not then surprising that genealogies, similar in method, though opposed in content, were also constructed for those who were charged with heresy.

The same principles were used by Augustine to exclude from the mainstream churches the Donatists, who had refused to readmit those who had lapsed during the Diocletian persecutions (303–305).

> For if the order of the succession of bishops is to be considered, with how much more certainty and indeed benefit do we count back from Peter himself, to whom, as bearing in a figure the whole church, the Lord said: "Upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it!" Linus succeeded Peter, Clement [succeeded] Linus… Siricius [succeeded] Damasus, and Anastasius, Siricius. In this order of succession no Donatist bishop is found.[9]

The primacy of the apostolic see had, according to this argument, always been in force.[10] For such bishops in the eastern churches as Augustine's near contemporary, Theodoret of Cyrrhus (d. c. 457), Roman supremacy was supported by the fact that its see had never been tainted by heresy. The same result was reached by the Western churches through a different line of reasoning. The apostolic grace was

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[7] Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses*, 3.3.2.

[8] Ibid. 3.3.3.

[9] Augustine, *Ep.* 53, 2; PL 33, 196.

[10] The claim that the Roman primacy was based on the Petrine privilege can perhaps more accurately be traced to pope Damasus (366–384). For a summary of each of the early pope's position on the primacy, see A.C. Piepkorn, "From Nicaea to Leo the Great," in P.C. Empie, T.A. Murphy, *Papal Primacy and the Universal Church* (Minneapolis, 1974), pp. 73–97.

the foundation for Roman supremacy that had successfully protected its see from heresy, not the other way around as Theodoret saw it.

The lineal succession of bishops was a doctrine so well established by the time of Leo that he did not need to repeat it. Nowhere in his letters or sermons does he recite the genealogy of the Roman see, as Irenaeus and Augustine had, in spite of his great interest in securing its primacy. His distinctive contribution made the past present not merely by repeating this doctrine of succession, the unbroken chain of tradition established by his predecessors, but by imagining a line that bypassed the limits of time and history, linking the bishop of Rome directly to Peter, whom Leo considered to be present "in the person of [his] lowliness" and whose "dignity does not fade even in an unworthy heir."[11] Christians were to accept his teaching as the equivalent to Peter's and to consider Peter as present in him.[12] The concept already existed in Roman jurisprudence, which, as Ullmann has found, understood the person to be present in his legal representative and the deceased present in his heir.[13] Leo developed the idea further, thereby making "the church of tradition" that Irenaeus envisioned into "the church of the capital city that extend[ed] its laws to the whole world."[14]

This new concept of a Christian universalism whose center was Rome was realized by making its bishop not merely the representative of Peter, in the way that a secular ambassador represented the city of Rome, but his living successor. Rome's judgments and decrees were rendered universal because the apostle was understood to be present in the person of Leo and in the system of justice that he administered.[15] Both ways of being present contributed to Leo's plan to conceive of a Christian Rome whose defining characteristic was its sweeping sense

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[11] Leo, *Serm.* 3.4, 19 Sept. 443, *Quotiens nobis misericordia Dei.* 'in persona humilitatis meae ille intellegatur, ille honoretur … cuius dignitas etiam in indigno herede non deficit.' "This man [Peter] should be regarded in the person of my lowliness, this man should be honored … whose dignity does not fade even in an unworthy heir."

[12] as it was accepted and considered by the Council of Chalcedon: "Peter has spoken through Leo" (said after the *Tome* was read into the record). *Chalced. (451) Gesta*, Actio II (d. 10 m. Oct. a. 451). ACO II, I, 2, p. 81. See W. Ullmann, "Leo I and the Theme of Papal Primacy," *JTS* 11 (1960), pp. 26–28.

[13] Ullmann, "Leo I and the Theme of Papal Primacy," pp. 33–36. There was "juristic identity between heir and deceased." Ibid.

[14] K. Schatz, *Papal Primacy. From Its Origins to the Present* (Collegeville, MN, 1996), pp. 31–32. Ullmann considers Leo to be responsible for developing a juristic theology. See Ullmann, "Leo I and the Theme of Papal Primacy," p. 33.

[15] And Ullmann argues that all ecclesiastical power was thought to derive from Peter. See Ullmann, "Leo I and the Theme of Papal Primacy," p. 44.

of justice: "If we do something correctly or judge something correctly, if we obtain something from the mercy of God through daily supplications, it is [the result of] his [i.e., Peter's] works and merit, whose power lives in his see and whose authority reigns."[16] Peter's presence brought about the Christian universalism that Leo envisioned[17] because he was the cause of Leo's actions and the inspiration for his justice. The power had been given to him by God as compensation ('remuneratio') for a steadfast faith that transcended the uncertainty that others experienced.[18] What Peter had received divinely was thought to have been inherited by his heirs, the bishops of Rome who, by their very office, participated in the apostolic succession. The dignity of the Roman see was not merely a result of this apostolic succession, or of the inheritance from Peter, but of a special relationship to Christ that ensured his continuing presence.[19]

The inseparable union between Peter and Christ was based upon Leo's interpretation of the Gospel of Matthew (16:13–19):

> When [the Lord] demanded [to know] what the disciples thought, this man who was first in dignity among the apostles was the first to confess the Lord. When he had said, "You are Christ, Son of the living God," Jesus replied to him, "Blessed are you Simon, son of John, because flesh and blood have not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven" … [And] just as my father has revealed my divinity to you, so I make known to you your excellence ('excellentia'). "That you are Peter," that is to say, although I am the indestructible rock, I "the cornerstone who make both things one," I "the foundation besides which no one can place another," nonetheless you too are rock because you are made so firm in

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[16] Leo, *Serm.* 3.3, 19 Sept. 443. 'Si quid itaque a nobis recte agitur recteque decernitur, si quid a misericordia Dei cotidianis supplicationibus obtinetur, illius est operum atque meritorum, cuius in sede sua vivit potestas, excellit auctoritas.' During the Gregorian reforms of the 11th century, Leo was cited to support the centralized position of the papacy. J. Hallebeek, "The Roman Pontiff as Direct Judge of Appeal and the Identity of the Latin Church," in J. Frishman, et al., *Religious Identity and the Problem of Historical Foundation* (Leiden, Boston, 2004), p. 390.

[17] Leo, *Ep.* 5.2, 12 January 444, *Omnis admonitio*, Jaffé 403.

[18] "It was the personal merit of St. Peter at Caesarea Philippi to have recognized Christ, and *because of this* Christ distinguished Peter by conferring plenary powers on him." Ullmann, "Leo I and the Theme of Papal Primacy," pp. 34–35.

[19] Leo, *Serm.* 5.4, post 445(?), *Sicut honor est filiorum, dilectissimi*. 'ubicumque aliquid ostenditur firmitatis, non dubie apparet fortitudo pastoris.' "Wherever there is any steadfastness," Leo said, "it is undoubtedly the shepherd's [i.e. Peter's] fortitude that appears." On the relationship between Peter, Christ, and the pope, see Ullmann, "Leo I and the Theme of Papal Primacy," pp. 39–43. For Leo there was an inseparable union between Peter and Christ that was the result of the "conferment of plenary powers on the former, so that he and Christ are the same." Ibid., p. 39.

> my strength ('virtus') that what belongs to my power ('potestas') you share with me by participation ('participatio'). "On this rock I shall build my church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it."[20]

To elaborate upon the connection between Peter and the church Leo used juridical metaphors: Peter was given the primacy of the apostolic dignity as compensation ('remuneratio') for his faith; the universal church was established on the foundation of his steadfastness ('soliditas'); and Leo, as his successor, was responsible for its care ('sollicitudinis').[21] Through these metaphors and others that Ullmann has identified,[22] Leo not only imbued the doctrine of the primacy with the legal precision and weight of the Roman secular law. He infused the church with the same divine justice that Peter was the beneficiary of. From the Gospel of Matthew (16:19), which gave to Peter the keys to the kingdom of heaven, that whatever he "loosed on earth will be loosed also in heaven,"[23] Leo argued that Peter was also given the power to dispense justice. It was to be administered compassionately wherever the Petrine privilege ('privilegium') resided, for "there cannot be too much severity or too much lenience where nothing is bound, nothing loosed except for what the blessed Peter has loosed or bound."[24] Through exercising the virtue of compassion human beings had the capacity to imitate the model of divine justice that Peter had provided.

More than two centuries earlier, Tertullian had used this same passage to ascribe to Peter an omniscience that enabled him to serve as the quintessential judge: "Was anything concealed from Peter … who obtained the keys of the kingdom of heaven and the power of loosing and binding in heaven and on earth?" he asked.[25] Elsewhere he

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[20] Leo, *Serm.* 83.1, 29 June 443, *Exultemus in Domino, dilectissimi*; here I follow the variant reading, which adds: 'ego fundamentum praeter quod nemo potest aliud ponere.' cf. *Serm.* 4.2, ll. 69–70, 29 September 444, *Gaudeo, dilectissimi.*

[21] Leo, *Ep.* 5.2, 12 January 444, Jaffé 403. See Ullmann, "Leo I and the Theme of Papal Primacy," p. 33.

[22] See Ullmann, "Leo I and the Theme of Papal Primacy," pp. 32–45.

[23] The power of loosing and binding ('ligare' and 'solvere') derives from Roman jurisprudence. See Ullmann, "Leo I and the Theme of Papal Primacy," pp. 36–37.

[24] Leo, *Serm.* 83, 29 June 443, 'nec nimia est vel severitas, vel remissio, ubi nihil erit ligatum, nihil solutum, nisi quod beatus Petrus aut solverit aut liga[rit].' *Serm.* 4.3, 29 September.

[25] Tertullian, *De praescriptione haereticorum* 22, PL 2, 34. On the interpretation of Matt 16:17–19 in the early church, see V. Kesich, "Peter's Primacy in the New Testament and the Early Tradition," in ed. J. Meyendorff, *The Primacy of Peter: essays in ecclesiology and the early church* (Crestwood, N.Y., 1992), pp. 61–65. Tertullian was the first to mention the passage explicitly. Ibid., p. 60.

warned against interpreting the passage too broadly. The privilege did not extend to every church that was congenial to Peter, and it certainly did not extend to those that were not, even when that church was the apostolic see. When pope Stephen (pope, 254–257) boasted of his apostolic succession, while continuing to recognize baptisms that heretics had performed, Firmilian of Caesarea complained to Cyprian (d. 258). The power of loosing and binding did not extend to popes who communed with heretics and schismatics.[26] The image of Peter as the divine judge, the doorkeeper of the heavenly kingdom, was developed by Hilary of Poitiers (d. 368) in his *Commentarius in Matthaeum*, where he said of Peter, "Blessed gatekeeper of heaven, at whose disposal the keys of the entrance into eternity are delivered, whose judgment on earth is an authority prejudged in heaven, that whatever is either loosed or bound on earth secures a settlement of the same statute in heaven."[27] Not only was Peter the arbiter of justice on earth whose judgments were recognized in heaven, but the authority he had been given destined each of his judgments to be suffused with divine fairness.

Leo developed this image of Peter as the ultimate dispenser of justice by extending his powers to every aspect of the church's mission and organization. "Nearly all the martyrs in every place have been granted—[as a reward] for enduring the sufferings they underwent to make their merits known—the ability to help those in danger, to drive away sicknesses, to expel unclean spirits, and to cure numerous illnesses. Who then," he reasoned, "will be so ignorant of the glory of the blessed Peter or so envious in their estimation of it as to believe any part of the church not guided by his concern or fortified by his help?"[28] Like the martyrs whose power continued to work in the lives of Christians, the judicial power that Peter exercised was thought to reside in the judgments of Rome.[29] This was a direct response to such theologians as Tertullian, who saw only the pretensions of the apostolic see in its extension of the Petrine authority to the person of the pope and to the churches. It was Leo's achievement to articulate a theory that invested the ortho-

[26] Cyprian, *Ep.* 75.11.

[27] Hilary of Poitiers, *Commentarius in Matthaeum*, 16.7, PL 9, 1010. 'O beatus caeli ianitor, cuius arbitrio claves aeterni aditus traduntur, cuius terrestre iudicium praeiudicata auctoritas sit in caelo, ut quae in terris aut ligata sint aut soluta statuti eiusdem condicionem obtineant et in caelo.'

[28] Leo, *Serm.* 5.4, post 445 (?).

[29] Ibid.

dox churches, and especially Rome, with the authority to participate in the power to implement justice that had been given to Peter.[30]

Western theologians prior to Leo had acknowledged that Peter was the origin of ecclesiastical unity, but not the model of divine justice that Leo also considered him to be. "There is one God, and one Christ, and one church, and one chair founded upon the rock by the Word of the Lord,"[31] said Cyprian, for whom Peter was the source of that unity even though he was equal in power to the apostles.[32] Jerome similarly remarked that one among the apostles who had received the keys of the kingdom of heaven was chosen that there might be no occasion for schism.[33] Augustine was the only theologian before Leo who considered the relationship between Peter and the church more closely. Referring to a book of his that he does not name, which he had written against the schismatic leader Donatus (d. c. 355), Augustine said that he wrote of Peter, "On him as on a rock the church was built." In the same passage we learn that Ambrose had developed a similar sentiment in one of his poems: "At [the cock's] crowing, this very rock of the church washed away his guilt."[34] What interested Augustine was determining the identity of 'the rock'. Was Peter the rock, or was it Christ? Surprisingly, for Augustine that rock was Christ, the Son of the living God whom Peter confessed. Named for this 'rock', Peter was to represent the person of the church that was built upon the rock, and to receive "the keys of the kingdom of heaven."

This was the beginning of an idea that was fully explored by Leo. The power of Christ that was manifest in Peter, who shared his power by participation, was then conferred upon the bishop of Rome.[35] Leo conceived of a unified church whose legitimacy was ensured by Peter's continuing presence in such actions of the apostolic see as the formulation of doctrine and the exercise of ecclesiastical justice. Both actions

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[30] Ibid. 5.5. 'ut manente apud nos iure ligandi atque solvendi, per moderamen beatissimi Petri et condemnatus ad paenitentiam et reconciliatus perducatur ad veniam.' "Since the right to bind and loose remains with us," he said, "through the guidance of the blessed Peter the condemned are led to penance and the reconciled to pardon."

[31] Cyprian, *Ep.* 40.5, PL 4, 336. That idea was repeated by Optatus of Milevus in the fourth century, who called the episcopal chair given to Peter, "the one chair in which unity is maintained by all." Optatus of Milevis, *De schismate Donatistarum*, 2.2.

[32] Cyprian, *De catholicae ecclesiae unitate*, 4.

[33] Jerome, *Adversus Iovinianum*, 1.26, PL 23, 217.

[34] Augustine, *Retractationes* 1.21.1, PL 32, 617–618.

[35] Leo, *Serm.* 83.1, 29 June 443.

were paradoxically construed as the expression of the contrasting principles of tradition and change. Tradition was the unbroken connection to the apostolic past, while change was the consequence of that tradition being made alive through Peter's continuing presence. The relationship between Christ and Peter, and between Peter and the bishop of Rome, enabled Leo to conceive of the apostolic see as the sole repository of a living and fluid tradition whose actions were imbued continuously with the divine power of its origin.

What is distinctive about Leo, which other commentators have not noticed, is that his articulation of the Petrine privilege made his theology of justice genuinely nuanced. It was not inexorably bound to a fossilized tradition and it did not "preexist the case at hand."[36] That is because he had successfully used this Petrine theory to craft from the views of his predecessors a more fluid sense of justice, which, far from undermining the actions of Rome, made them that much more legitimate. A guiding principle rather than a rigid formula, the justice that Leo conceived of emphasized the capacity of ecclesiastical procedure to facilitate a just and flexible outcome according to the facts of individual cases. Because people were morally ambiguous, the laws that they interpreted and the discipline they administered were to be governed by juridical guidelines that incorporated the intent behind the law. That law was to be followed in every instance scrupulously, but never blindly, as I have suggested above. The compassionate application of the law demonstrated that Petrine justice operated in the actions of the apostolic see. Leo convinced the majority of the Western churches that "the right to bind and loose remain[ed] in [his] possession" because he had carefully articulated the difference between delivering justice according to a rigid formula (which they might have rejected), and dispensing it humanely, according to a method of interpretation that was rooted in principles that considered the particular facts of the case. The authority for this fluid method lay in the abiding presence of Petrine justice. It granted the bishop of Rome an imaginative freedom in rendering judgments, even while it bound him to follow the ecclesiastical law as the mysterious expression of a perfect justice that human beings could only aspire to implement.

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[36] From L. Menand, *The Metaphysical Club. A Story of Ideas in America* (New York, 2001), p. 432. Although the reference is to American legal history, there are some interesting parallels here.

The earliest extant evidence we have that the bishop of Rome was recognized, by anyone other than the bishop of Rome, as holding a place of primacy comes from canon 3 of the Council of Sardica (343). There it said that

> if any bishop [loses] the judgment in some case, and still thinks that he has a good case, and that the case should be reopened, if it pleases you, let us honor the memory of the blessed Peter, the apostle, and let [a letter] be written to the Roman bishop either by those who heard the case or by bishops who reside in a neighbouring province. If he shall judge that the case should be reopened, then let it be reopened, and let him appoint judges [from among the bishops of the neighbouring province (according to the Greek text)].[37]

Here is evidence that the bishop of Rome, by the middle of the fourth century, exercised a kind of appellate jurisdiction over the western provinces.[38] His office had come to be seen as a court of last appeal, the final opportunity to right a wrong that may have been committed by local bishops, who were then expected to retry the case under the auspices of papal authority. How deeply that authority was to govern their ecclesiastical administration was clarified in what Hess has called a protective supplement to the canon.[39] Any bishop who was deposed by the judgment of the local bishops was, upon his request, not to be replaced until the bishop of Rome had been apprised of the facts, determined their worthiness, and rendered a decision. How many cases may have been refused a papal appeal remains unclear, since the extant evidence, consisting mainly of letters that were kept in the papal archives, has preserved only those cases that the bishop of Rome agreed to hear. One is left with the impression that he was generally delighted to intervene in such cases.

The canons of Sardica were a formal codification of Rome's response to the case presented by Athanasius when he, accompanied by sev-

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[37] Council of Sardica, canon 3, H. Hess, *The early development of Canon law and the Council of Serdica* (Oxford, 2002), pp. 212–214; ibid., p. 191; cf. Joannou, pp. 162–163.

[38] Hess remarks that in assessing whether the canon confirmed an existing state of affairs "it is difficult to determine how much weight should be assigned to the personal influence of Julius in the historical situation on the one hand and to the recognized primacy of the Roman see on the other." Ibid., p. 187. On Sardica as a turning point in the development of the Roman primacy, see K. Schatz, *Papal Primacy. From Its Origins to the Present* (Collegeville, MN, 1996), pp. 24–26.

[39] which was proposed by Gaudentius of Naissus. Hess, *The early development of Canon law*, p. 193. Council of Sardica, canon 4, ibid., pp. 214–215; cf. Joannou, p. 164. See also Hess, pp. 193–194.

eral bishops, including Paul of Constantinople, Marcellus of Ancyra, and Asclepas of Gaza, fled there (341).[40] After he left Alexandria, we are told by Athanasius in his *Apologia ad Constantium*, he went directly to Rome in order to appeal the judgment of the Eusebian bishops at Tyre against him.[41] Because Athanasius, and those who fled with him, had been deposed from their sees ostensibly for committing numerous crimes, but, in fact, for refusing to subscribe to Arianism, Rome, a defender of Nicene orthodoxy, was the right place to be. Pope Julius (pope, 337–352), presiding over a council of 50 bishops (341), heard their appeals and overturned the decision that had been reached at Tyre, as he said in a commendatory letter.[42] With this letter in hand, Athanasius and Paul left Rome and were eventually reinstated to their respective sees.[43] It is worth noting that two of Athanasius' accusers, Ursacius of Singidunum and Valens of Mursa, were just as interested as he was in winning Rome's approval. When they read Julius' letter in support of the bishop, they immediately wrote to him, asking his forgiveness for the charges they had made unjustly. "Since it is well known that earlier we have made many grievous charges in writing against the bishop Athanasius, when we were corrected by the letters of your goodness, we were unable to render an account of the statement we had made; we do now confess before your goodness … Wherefore we earnestly [wish to] restore to communion the aforesaid Athanasius."[44] Before receiving that letter, Julius was irate that Ursacius and Valens had condemned Athanasius without consulting him first. He reasoned that even before the Council of Sardica formally assigned to him appellate jurisdiction, there had been a long-standing custom in which those intending to file charges against a bishop were to seek Rome's advice.[45]

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[40] There was precedent for Athanasius' appeal to Rome. See Hess, *The early development of Canon law*, p. 188. The personal influence of Julius was significant, though not decisive, in the formulation of the canon. Ibid., p. 189.

[41] Athanasius, *Apologia ad Constantium*, 4. See Hess, *The early development of Canon law*, p. 98; for the charges against Athanasius at Tyre, see T.D. Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius. Theology and Politics in the Constantinian Empire* (Cambridge, 1993), pp. 22–25; for Athanasius' defense, see ibid., pp. 25–33.

[42] See Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius*, pp. 56–62. For the view that Julius saw himself as responsible for facilitating ecclesiastical communion, see Schatz, *Papal Primacy*, pp. 22–24.

[43] Athanasius was reinstated in 346 and Paul in 349.

[44] Athanasius, *Apologia contra Arianos*, 58, PG 25b, 353.

[45] Julius said in a letter to the Eusebian bishops, preserved in ibid. 21–35; cf. Socrates, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, 2.17, for a more authoritarian portrait of Julius.

Outside of Rome, this principle was also recognized by such a prominent Christian as Jerome, who thought he was obligated to consult with the apostolic see when the East was being "crushed by its long-standing feuds." Perhaps out of genuine respect for the authority of Rome, or perhaps intending merely to win its approval and ensure its support, Jerome deferred to the apostolic see in the most florid tones available: "The vast expanse of sea and the stretch of land that separates us cannot," he said, "deter me from searching for the pearl of great price … Though your greatness terrifies me, your kindness attracts me."[46] Augustine was less poetic, but just as definitive, when he said of the Pelagian controversy, Rome has replied; the case is closed.[47] We have already seen that Peter Chrysologus refused to hear Eutyches' appeal from the standing synod of Constantinople, claiming that he, Peter, did not have the authority to try cases concerning doctrine without the consent of the bishop of Rome.[48] A couple of years earlier, the eastern bishops Flavian, Theodoret, and Eusebius had fully recognized Rome's authority when they wrote to Leo regarding their depositions by the Robber Synod.[49] And the legates of pope Caelestine had successfully imposed their vision of apostolicity on the eastern churches when they asserted before the Council of Ephesus I that Peter, "the prince and leader of the apostles … [who] was given the power of loosing and binding sins," continued to live and judge in his successors.[50]

In the West, by the middle of the fourth century, Rome was already well on its way toward being broadly recognized as a court of final appeal in matters of doctrine and discipline. As pope Damasus (pope, 366–384) wrote,

> [T]he holy Roman church is preferred to the other churches not by any conciliar decisions, but has received the primacy by the evangelic voice of our Lord and Savior, who says, "you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church," … The first see, therefore, is the Roman church of Peter the apostle … The second see, furthermore, is that of Alexandria, consecrated in the name of Peter by Mark, his disciple and an evangelist

[46] Jerome, *Ep.* 15.1–2, PL 22, 355. 'Neque vero tanta vastitas elementi liquentis, et interjacens longitudo terrarum, me a pretiosae margaritae potuit inquisitione prohibere … Quanquam igitur tui me terreat magnitudo, invitat tamen humanitas.'

[47] Augustine, *Serm.* 131.10, PL 38, 734.

[48] Peter Chrysologus, *Ep.* 25.2; *Epistula Petri Ep. Ravennensis ad Eutychem*, ACO II, 3, I, p. 6.

[49] *Flaviani libellus appellationis ad Leonem papam.* ACO II, 2, I, pp. 77–79; Theodoret of Cyrrhus, *Ep.* 113; *Eusebii libellus appellationis ad Leonem papam.* ACO II, 2, I, pp. 79–81.

[50] *Gesta Ephesina, Actiones II et III* (d. 10 et 11 m. Iul. a. 431). ACO I, I, 3, p. 60.

> … The third see, in fact, is that of Antioch, which was held by the most blessed apostle Peter, where he lived first before he came to Rome.[51]

This was a clear statement that the Roman primacy was grounded in the principle of apostolicity and not in the decisions of councils. Pope Innocent (pope, 401–417) went so far as to suggest that no case was settled, no matter how remote its province, until it had come before Rome.[52] Leo's challenge was to defend such claims in the context of the see of Constantinople's expanding jurisdiction in the East.

2. *The controversy over the 28th canon*[53]

The principle of apostolicity, which had evolved in the previous centuries into a well-articulated ideology, became, as Dagron has remarked, a theoretical mantle by which Rome mobilized the sees of Alexandria and Antioch against Constantinople at a time when it sought to exercise special privileges.[54] Because apostolicity was as deeply compelling to Constantinople as it was to Rome, it should come as no surprise that Constantinople attempted to justify its own ascent to power using these same principles. Yet it was "not these principles" in the abstract, but the oftentimes contradictory "histories [i.e., of the sees] that were in reality brought face to face."[55]

How the see of Constantinople envisioned its ecclesiastical position or 'privileges' in relation to Rome and the other patriarchates was the object of focused scrutiny at the Council of Chalcedon. The controversial canon 28 that ensued revealed Constantinople coming to terms with its self-understanding as the "New Rome" and as the heir to

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[51] Damasus I, PL 19, 794.

[52] Innocent I, 27 January 417, *In requirendis*, Jaffé 321; PL 20, 583.

[53] On the legal prerogatives of Old Rome that the New Rome wished to share, see T.O. Martin, "The Twenty-Eighth Canon of Chalcedon: A Background Note," in eds. Grillmeier, Bacht, *Das Konzil von Chalkedon*, pp. 433–458; E. Herman, "Chalkedon und die Ausgestaltung des konstantinoplitanischen Primats," in eds. Grillmeier, Bacht, *Das Konzil von Chalkedon*, pp. 459–490; on the task of the council, its authority, its capacity to establish unity, and the ecclesiological problem from the papal and eastern points of view, see W. de Vries, *Orient et Occident. Les structures ecclésiales vues dans l'histoire des sept premiers conciles oecuméniques* (Paris, 1974), pp. 101–160.

[54] G. Dagron, "Constantinople, la primauté après Rome," in F. Elia, *Politica retorica e simbolismo del primato: Roma e Costantinopli (secoli IV–VII)* (Catania, 2002), pp. 23–38, esp. p. 28.

[55] Ibid.

Roman virtues, rather than its attempt to undermine the Roman primacy.[56] While the canon assigned to Constantinople its second place after Rome and accorded it equal privileges, it raised subtle questions about the way in which Rome and Constantinople viewed each other, about the scope and extent of papal authority in the empire, and about the differing strategies by which the shared ideology of Christian unity was achieved.

Although Leo was unable to attend the council "because of the demands of the time," he was present through the legates he sent to represent him, which included two bishops and a presbyter, Paschasinus, Lucentius, and Boniface.[57] They were charged with the mission to protect orthodoxy and the canons, while upholding the Roman ideal of moderation, which infused the law with mercy and kindness. Moderation was, as I have suggested, connected to the principle of apostolicity through the justice innate in Peter. "I have wanted that such moderation be observed amid contentious views and sinful jealousies that, while indeed no excisions or additions to the completeness of the faith should be permitted, yet the remedy of pardon should be granted to those who return to unity and peace," wrote Leo to the empress Pulcheria.[58] Because of the universal jurisdiction of the Roman see, moderation was to apply even to those at the Robber Synod who had deposed orthodox bishops. With the death of Theodosius II, the emperor who had convened the Robber Synod and supported Dioscorus, and with the rise of Marcian to the imperial throne, Leo was now widely regarded as the "mouthpiece of the blessed Peter," who, in presiding over the 520 priests at the council, and in "revealing [his] benevolent authority ('ordo benevolens') in the person of those who represented [him]," had the capacity to influence the conciliar process.[59] It was ostensibly to comply with his wishes that the council

[56] See Ibid., pp. 24, 25, 27.

[57] Leo, *Epp.* 93.1, 94, Jaffé 473, 474. Leo. *Ep.* 95.1, Jaffé 475. Through them and the papal letter that they carried, Leo was thought to be present at the synod. Moderation was to be applied "that rashness should not impede the rules of the faith, the decrees of the canons, or the remedies of loving kindness." 'ne ulla temeritas aut fidei regulis, aut canonum statutis, aut benignitatis remediis obviaret.'

[58] Ibid. 95.2. 'hanc inter discordes sensus et carnales aemulationes moderationem volui custodiri, ut integritati quidem fidei nihil evelli, nihil liceret apponi; ad unitatem vero pacemque redeuntibus, remedium veniae praestaretur.' See translation in trans. Price, Gaddis, *The acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, vol. 1, p. 105.

[59] Leo, *Ep.* 98.1. Here I translate from the Latin, because that is the version Leo would have seen.

had deposed Dioscorus and Eutyches, and administered to their penitent followers the moderation that he required.[60] As deferential as this recognition of Roman authority appeared, it painted only a partial picture of the complex relationship that was unfolding between Rome and the imperial see.

The church of Constantinople pursued its own agenda of defining its place among the eastern patriarchates in the light of its status as the 'new Rome' and its developing presence in the region. Their case was presented to Leo in a letter, written by conciliar members from the church of Constantinople, which said that the council (in promulgating canon 28) did not intend to confer a new privilege, but merely to recognize the existing custom. Their claim was that Constantinople was already responsible for ordaining metropolitans for the provinces of Asia Minor, Pontus, and Thrace, and that acknowledging their authority in this regard would enable them to govern those cities more effectively.[61] There was some merit to this argument. Upon the death of certain bishops in the region, it seems that disorder had arisen frequently, as it had in the city of Ephesus when two men, Basian and Stephen, contended for the bishopric.[62] By making the see of Constantinople responsible for the election of metropolitans in those regions, the council hoped to ensure a smooth succession of episcopal power. They also ratified canon 3 of the Council of Constantinople (381), the letter continued, which elevated the see of Constantinople to second place after Rome. The reasoning that they presented in this letter, which differed from that of the canon itself (as I shall discuss below), was that Rome, and Leo in particular, had often extended the apostolic privilege to Constantinople. What the letter writers were thinking in making such a claim can only be surmised. Perhaps they meant that Leo acknowledged their privileged status when he defended their bishop, Flavian, against Dioscorus, the bishop of Alexandria, their rival see. Perhaps they thought that Rome honored them with the apostolic privilege when it placed its representative, Julian of Cios, there. Or perhaps they simply wished to justify what they had already resolved to do. Whatever their motivation, the argument astutely recognized that the prin-

[60] Ibid. 98.2–3.

[61] Ibid. 98.4.

[62] Note that in this and other cases the legates respected the jurisdictional privileges of the East. See A. de Halleux, "Le décret Chalcédonien sur les prérogatives de la nouvelle Rome," *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 64 (1988), p. 303.

ciple of apostolicity should be the basis for any jurisdictional claims against Rome, even while it failed to persuade the Roman opposition that was mounting against them by the legates.[63] Apostolicity and apostolic succession could not, as far as Rome was concerned, be conferred legitimately upon another see.

The legates' strategy was to set aside the theoretical discussion and to focus the debate through the lens of conciliar procedure. During the council's sixteenth session[64] they had intentionally provoked dissension when two of them, Boniface and Lucentius, voiced their objection to the elevation of the Constantinopolitan see by criticizing the ecclesiastical procedure by which that decision had been reached on the previous day. After they and the imperial representatives had departed from the fifteenth session, Paschasinus said, minutes were recorded that violated ecclesiastical law and discipline.[65] He was suggesting that the council had undermined the conciliar process when it ratified such a controversial canon in an informal session, without their presence.

Aetios, the archdeacon of the church of Constantinople, saw the matter differently:

> We asked the lord bishops from Rome to take part in the proceedings, but they declined, saying that they had not received such a mandate. We then approached your magnificence, and you directed the holy council here present to examine the matter. When your magnificence had departed, the most holy bishops, since the matter under discussion was of common concern, stood up and demanded that the matter be dealt with. They are present here. Nothing was transacted in secret or in a fraudulent matter; the proceedings were regular and canonical.[66]

Aetios' interpretation of their absence differed greatly from that of the legates. Suggesting that the imperial representatives had approved of the preliminary meeting, he said that the legates had declined to par-

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[63] Leo, *Ep.* 98.4. They were unwilling to recognize that see as being second to Rome. As the council reported, the legates had "attempted vehemently to resist these decisions, wanting without any doubt that this good work should originate from [Leo's] foresight." 'his ita constitutis vehementer resistere tentaverunt, procul dubio a vestra providentia inchoari et hoc bonum volentes.'

[64] I am following the numbering of the Latin acts, although the translations are based upon both the Greek and Latin acts.

[65] *Chalced. (451) Actio XVII*, ACO II, I, 3, p. 88.

[66] Ibid. Translation in trans. R. Price, M. Gaddis, *The acts of the Council of Chalcedon* (Liverpool, 2005), vol. 3, p. 75. The preliminary meeting at which canon 28 was approved took place after the 15th session on 31 October 451, and then the 16th session took place on 1 November 451. Ibid., pp. 72–73.

ticipate because they had not received instructions from Rome. Their absence did not in any sense invalidate what was decided at the session. For the legates, the fact that Leo had not authorized such a discussion not only accounted for their absence from the session, but also nullified its legitimacy. Although their ostensible reason for departing was acknowledged by both Aetios and the legates, their underlying motive for doing so remains unclear.[67] Were they so obedient to Rome that they refused to be present when questions other than those that Leo had articulated in his letter were being raised? Having learned that two earlier canons passed by the council (9 and 17) had already ascribed appellate jurisdiction to the church of Constantinople, did they despair of ever stopping that see from formalizing its extension of jurdisdiction in the region? Or, by departing from the conciliar discussion, did they wish to lay the groundwork for establishing that a procedural violation had been made when the bishops attempted to ratify the canon in their absence? Whatever the circumstances under which the legates departed, and whatever the precise reasons that they did so, they likely followed the imperial representatives out of the church once they realized that any objections they raised to the canon would not be heeded.

In their absence, the matter of the 28th canon, which conferred on the see of Constantinople its second place after Rome, was openly addressed before the council.

> Following in all things the decrees of the holy fathers and acknowledging the canon just read of the 150 most God-beloved bishops who assembled under the then emperor Theodosius the Great of pious memory in imperial Constantinople New Rome, we too define and decree the same regarding the privileges of the most holy church of the same Constantinople New Rome. The fathers appropriately accorded privileges to the see of Senior Rome because it was the imperial city and, moved by the same intent, the 150 most God-beloved bishops assigned equal privileges to the most holy see of New Rome, rightly judging that city which is honoured with the imperial government and the senate and enjoys equal privileges with imperial Senior Rome should be exalted like her in ecclesiastical affairs as well, being second after her…[68]

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[67] For the plausible suggestion that the legates and magistrates were absent because the session during which it took place was not entirely official, the topic of jurisidictional privileges not having been approved for discussion, see de Halleux, "Le décret Chalcédonien sur les prérogatives de la nouvelle Rome," pp. 305–306.

[68] Ibid., pp. 88–89. Translation in trans. Price, Gaddis, *The acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, vol. 3, pp. 75–76.

In this, its first part, the canon was mainly a restatement of what had already been decided in canon 3 at the Council of Constantinople in 381, where the bishop of Constantinople was assigned "the *privileges of honor* after the bishop of Rome, because Constantinople is the new Rome (emph. suppl.)."[69] What was significant in the first part of canon 28 was not the paragraph of text that it added to this earlier canon, but the single word that it took away. The word 'honor' was no longer used to modify the 'privileges' that had been accorded the bishop of the Constantinopolitan see. This meant that the 'privileges' were no longer 'honorary', but had been given a status equal to those exercised by Rome. It was also significant from Rome's point of view that the church of Constantinople now claimed, even more emphatically than it had at the Council of Constantinople seventy years before, that the primacy of the Roman see was derived not from its special relationship to Peter and to his divinely-given power. It was derived rather from its special relationship to imperial and, therefore, to secular power.

This new way of construing the basis for Roman authority was deeply offensive to Leo, who likely envisioned the end of Rome as an imperial city and, therefore, the necessity of preserving the principles of apostolicity as the basis for the Roman primacy. From Constantinople's point of view, the secular argument was merely a convenient way to justify its extension of ecclesiastical jurisdiction. Because Constantinople had become the seat of imperial authority, it, as the new Rome, was to be given jurisdictional privileges that were modeled upon those of the senior Rome. The problem was that Constantinople did not foresee the consequences of its argument in the light of the changing geopolitical situation in the West. There was no real competition between Rome and Constantinople, only the desire on the part of Leo to preserve the principle of apostolicity as the foundation of its primacy, and on the part of the church of Constantinople to address certain practical concerns that had arisen in the sphere of church organization.

What those practical concerns consisted in can be gathered from the second part of canon 28, by which the church of Constantinople was invested with jurisdiction over the regions of Asia Minor, Pontus, and Thrace.

> … with the consequence that the metropolitans alone of the Pontic, Asian and Thracian dioceses, and also the bishops from the aforesaid dioceses in barbarian lands, are to be consecrated by the aforesaid most

[69] Council of Constantinople, Canon 3. Joannou, pp. 47–48.

> holy see of the most holy church at Constantinople, while, of course, each metropolitan of the aforesaid dioceses, together with the bishops of the province, ordains the bishops of the province, as is laid down in the divine canons. As has been said, the metropolitans of the aforesaid dioceses are to be consecrated by the archbishop of Constantinople, after elections by consensus have taken place according to custom and been reported to him.[70]

The members of the council who later wrote to Leo knew that he might find this formal extension of jurisdiction offensive. That is why they spoke in their letter of the disorder that had arisen within the bishoprics of Asia Minor, Pontus, and Thrace, the same disorder that Leo was meant to believe that this portion of the canon might alleviate.[71]

Given its developing presence in the region, it should come as no surprise that the see of Constantinople endeavored to have its status among the patriarchates formally acknowledged. For many years it had unofficially extended its jurisdiction, over these regions and more, without the mandate of a canon that Rome had recognized. John Chrysostom, for instance, had ruled the dioceses of Asia Minor, Pontus, and Thrace, along with their twenty-eight provinces, according to Theodoret in his church history.[72] He had deposed the exarch Antonine of Ephesus at the standing synod in Constantinople, and at a synod in Ephesus had made Heraclides the bishop of Ephesus and had deposed six bishops from Asia Minor for simony.[73] From Socrates we learn that Atticus of Constantinople had passed an imperial law giving him the power to ordain bishops well beyond the limits of Thrace, as he did when he elected a bishop to the metropolitan see of Cyzicus "which belonged to the exarchate of Asia [Minor]."[74] Proclus of Constantinople had consecrated Thalassius, the former prefect of Illyria, as the bishop of Caesarea when the clergy of that city petitioned him after the death

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[70] The canon was read into the record, *Chalced. (451) Actio XVII*, ACO II, I, 3, p. 89. Translation in trans. Price, Gaddis, *The acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, vol. 3, p. 76. The title 'archbishop' is also used by the bishops of Chalcedon to describe Leo, the bishop of Alexandria, and the bishop of Jerusalem, as well as the bishops of the larger metropolitan sees. See W. Bright, *The Canons of the First Four General Councils of Nicaea, Constantinople, Ephesus, and Chalcedon* (Oxford, 1892), p. 223. On the interpretation of this canon see, G. Dagron, *Naissance d'une capitale, Constantinople et ses institutions de 330 à 451* (Paris, 1974), pp. 454–461, 475–487.

[71] See de Halleux, "Le décret Chalcédonien sur les prérogatives de la nouvelle Rome," p. 318.

[72] Theodoret, *Ecclesiastical History*, 5.28.

[73] C.J. Hefele, *A History of the Councils of the Church* vol. 3 (Edinburgh, 1883), p. 417.

[74] Ibid.

of their bishop, Firmus of Caesarea. He had also consecrated Basil as the bishop of Ephesus.[75] For the past 50 years, therefore, the church of Constantinople had viewed its power as extending well beyond the geographical limits of its see. The bishops from the regions into which that power extended did not always agree. At session four of Chalcedon, Photius, the bishop of Tyre, was gratefully discharged from one of Anatolius' decrees, and at session eleven, the bishops of the exarch of Asia Minor argued that the bishop of Ephesus should no longer be consecrated from Constantinople.[76] There were, indeed, objections to the jurisdiction exercised by the Constantinopolitan see, even while its bishops extended such privileges frequently and successfully into other regions.

Those objections were, however, few and far between. In the light of the fact that the sees of Alexandria and Ephesus were vacant, that Maximus, the bishop of Antioch, was in collaboration with Anatolius, that Juvenal of Jerusalem owed Anatolius a favor for having secured his control of the three provinces of Palestine, and that the primate of Thrace was being represented at Chalcedon by Anatolius' friend, Lucian of Byzia, it should come as no surprise that the most ardent objections to the canon were raised by the legates.[77] With the cards stacked against him and his colleagues from Rome, Lucentius insisted on examining the procedures by which canon 28 had been passed during the previous session. "Let your gloriousness first examine what deception was practised on the holy bishops to compel them to sign the unrecorded canons of which they have made mention."[78]

Striking here is Lucentius' use of the word 'compelled'. Only two years earlier, violent methods had been used by the Robber Synod, where orthodox bishops and clergy had been physically forced to subscribe to its controversial decrees. To assure Lucentius that Chalcedon had not repeated those violent methods, some of the bishops shouted, "No one was compelled!"[79] That declaration did not convince him that the decision reached during the session was legitimate. Additional problems were raised: the canons of Constantinople were not among

[75] Ibid., 418.
[76] Ibid., 418–419.
[77] Ibid., 419.
[78] *Chalced. (451) Actio XVII*, ACO II, I, 3, p. 94. Translation in trans. Price, Gaddis, *The acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, p. 84. See de Halleux, "Le décret Chalcédonien sur les prérogatives de la nouvelle Rome," p. 307.
[79] Ibid.

the synodal canons recognized by Rome; the bishop of Constantinople should not require a new canon to assert a privilege that he had supposedly been exercising since the Council of Constantinople (in 381); and if he had never exercised such a privilege, then there was no legitimate reason that he should begin to do so now.[80] To evaluate these claims, the legates were asked to introduce whatever papal orders they had received, whereupon Boniface, the presbyter, read from the letter that Leo had given to him: "Do not allow either the constitution issued by the holy fathers to be violated through temerity, preserving in every way the dignity of our person in you whom we sent in our stead; and if perchance any, relying on the splendour of their cities, attempt to usurp anything for themselves, you are to repel this with the firmness it deserves."[81] "The constitution issued by the holy fathers" was the decrees passed by the Council of Nicaea, and the legates thought that the present council had diminished them by ascribing to Constantinople second place after Rome and by confirming its broad jurisdictional privileges.

To determine whether this charge was legitimate, the judges asked that the Nicene canons be read into the conciliar record. From the Greek acts of the council we learn that Paschasinus thereupon introduced the Latin version of canon 6, which differed from the Greek text in one significant respect: the Latin text, and only the Latin text, began by asserting "the primacy of Rome in all matters."[82] Otherwise, the Greek and Latin texts were identical. Both versions recognized that the authority of the bishop of Alexandria over Egypt was analogous to the authority of the bishop of Rome. Both versions preserved the current jurisdictional privileges that were being exercised by the see of Antioch. And both versions acknowledged that a man may become a bishop only with the consent of his Metropolitan.[83] That no comment or dissent was recorded in the Greek acts regarding the single and most striking difference between the two canons—Rome's statement of its primacy—suggests either i) that the acts had been tampered with later by Roman editors who knew that this assertion of primacy was, in all

[80] Ibid., p. 95.

[81] Ibid. Translation in trans. Price, Gaddis, *The acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, vol. 3, p. 85.

[82] Ibid. This addition to canon 6 is found in both the Greek and Latin versions of the acts.

[83] Ibid., pp. 95–96.

likelihood, a corrupt addition that strategically reflected the views of the apostolic see, or ii) that the primacy of Rome was not an issue for the church of Constantinople.[84]

With respect to the first possibility, the Western version of canon 6 of Nicaea may have been introduced when the Greek acts were translated into Latin by editors who inserted the interpolated canon, and then were later made consistent with the Latin translation. (We know from a rescript that Valentinian III composed under the guidance and influence of Leo that the primacy of Rome was established not only by the merit of St. Peter and the dignity of the Roman city, but *by the authority of a holy synod* (i.e., Nicaea), suggesting that the interpolated Latin canon was widely accepted as authoritative.)[85] With respect to the second possibility, there was no objection to the interpolated canon because the church of Constantinople did not intend to challenge the principles of the Roman primacy, but rather to extend those principles in order to support its jurisdictional claims. As Price and Gaddis have plausibly observed, "The 'equal privileges' with those of Rome that the canon awards to Constantinople meant simply a comparable authority over subordinate metropolitan sees: they did not undermine the primacy of Rome as the first see of Christendom."[86] It was not, in other words, competition with Rome, but rather practical considerations that governed Constantinople's plan to formalize its exercise of jurisdiction in the region.

To make such claims legitimate, the church of Constantinople argued from the precedence of canon 3 of the Council of Constantinople. This was the canon that ascribed to the bishop of Constantinople the 'primacy of honor' after the bishop of Rome and that limited the jurisdiction of all the other major sees to their immediate regions, so that "the bishop of Alexandria is to administer only the affairs of Egypt, the bishops of the Orient are to administer only the Orient (the privileges in the canons of Nicaea being safeguarded for the church of Antioch), the bishops of the Asian diocese are to administer only the Asian diocese, those of Pontica the affairs only of Pontica, and those of

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[84] In that case, the Latin translation of the Greek acts introduced the Latin addition to the canon, and the Greek acts were eventually made consistent with the Latin translation.

[85] *Constitutio Valentiniani III Augusti*, Leo, *Ep.* 11; see W. Bright, *The Canons of the First Four General Councils*, p. 226.

[86] trans. Price, Gaddis, *The acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, vol. 3, p. 71.

Thrace the affairs only of Thrace."[87] In juxtaposing the Nicene canon with this one, the council was saying that the two canons should be read together in order that the church of Constantinople have the place of honor after Rome (canon 3 of Constantinople) and, like the church of Alexandria, exercise analogous jurisdictional privileges (canon 6 of Nicaea).[88]

The argument advanced by the eastern bishops was hindered by the fact that the canons of the Council of Constantinople were controversial in the West. That is why they looked for any sign from Leo, no matter how ambiguous, that Rome had assented to canon 3. Eusebius, the bishop of Dorylaeum claimed that he "read this canon [i.e. canon three of Constantinople] to the most holy pope in Rome in the presence of the clerics of Constantinople and he accepted it."[89] But we know from Leo's frequent objections to it that he never would subscribe to that canon, and that he never did subscribe to that canon. Because assigning such extensive jurisdiction to the church of Constantinople might impinge upon the rights of the other metropolitan sees in the East, the legates insisted that each and every bishop who signed canon 28 assure the council that he had not subscribed to it and relinquished his rights under the threat of force.

Once the judges agreed, 10 of the 16 bishops (from Asia Minor, Pontus, and Thrace) confirmed that their assent had been given freely. Some, such as Peter of Gangras and Seleucas of Amasia, said that their predecessors had been ordained from Constantinople, while others, such as Eusebius of Ancyra and Thalassius, the exarch of Pontus, said that they themselves did not wish to make ordinations, and eagerly accepted the intervention of the bishop of Constantinople.[90] Persuaded by the evidence that Constantinople had, indeed, been exercising its jurisdiction in the region legitimately and without the threat of force, the judges overruled the objections of the Roman legates: "From the proceedings and from the individual testimonies, we resolve that, above

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[87] *Chalced. (451) Actio XVII*, ACO II, I, 3, p. 96. Translation in trans. Price, Gaddis, *The acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, vol. 3, p. 87.

[88] On the juxtaposition of the Nicene canons with those of Constantinople I, see de Halleux, "Le décret Chalcédonien sur les prérogatives de la nouvelle Rome," pp. 310–312.

[89] *Chalced. (451) Actio XVII*, ACO II, I, 3, ibid., p. 96. trans. Price, Gaddis, *The acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, vol. 3, p. 89. See also ibid n. 45: the event took place when Eusebius was a refugee in Rome.

[90] Ibid., pp. 96–97.

all, primacy and exceptional honour should be preserved for the most God-beloved archbishop of Senior Rome according to the canons, but that the most sacred archbishop of imperial Constantinople New Rome is to enjoy the same privileges of honour, and that he is to have power, on the basis of his authority, to consecrate the metropolitans in the dioceses of Asia, Pontica, and Thrace."[91]

After the bishops agreed to this judgment, Lucentius registered his objection on procedural grounds:

> The apostolic see ought not to be humiliated in our presence, and therefore we ask your sublimity to order that whatever was transacted yesterday in our absence in prejudice of the canons or rules be nullified. But if otherwise, let our formal objection be recorded in the minutes, so that we may know what we ought to report to the apostolic man the pope of the universal church, so that he may pass sentence on either the insult to his see or the overturning of the canons.[92]

Although the final word was to rest with judges who simply ignored the legates' arguments,[93] the conciliar record sufficiently reflected their objections that Leo had reason to be concerned about the privileges claimed by the church of Constantinople, and especially by its bishop Anatolius.

3. *The focus shifts to Anatolius*

After Chalcedon, the problem for Leo was to reconcile the fact that the council had accepted his *Tome* as the definitive statement of orthodoxy, even while it compromised the canons. He was not prepared in the beginning to sacrifice ecclesiastical law in order to preserve the council's doctrinal decrees. The problem for the imperial court and for the church of Constantinople was to make him realize that the first point, the resolution of doctrine, was far too significant to jeopardize it by insisting on the second, the circumscription of privileges assigned to the Constantinopolitan see. The barrage of correspondence

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[91] Ibid., p. 98. Translation in trans. Price, Gaddis, *The acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, vol. 3, p. 90.

[92] Ibid., p. 99. Translation in trans. Price, Gaddis, *The acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, p. 91. See de Halleux, "Le décret Chalcédonien sur les prérogatives de la nouvelle Rome,", p. 316.

[93] "All our resolutions have been confirmed by the council." trans. Price, Gaddis, *The acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, vol. 3, p. 91.

that ensued after Chalcedon can be seen as the unfolding of a political process by which Leo was made to understand that limiting the privileges that Constantinople had assumed was incidental to settling the dogmatic questions that continued to undermine the ideal of ecclesiastical unity. Though it might seem obvious that to reject canon 28 might compromise the legitimacy of the council, this was less apparent to Leo than it was to the bishops. He probably thought that his *Tome* was the only christological statement that was needed to clarify the doctrine on which the council had also passed decrees.

Such different ways of viewing the problem illustrate how much emphasis the East placed on the authority of ecumenical councils, and how deeply ensconced Rome's identity was in its doctrine of apostolic succession, by which the divine authority of Peter was made to infuse every one of its pronouncements with legitimacy.[94] By exercising these Petrine privileges, Leo hoped to convince the church of Constantinople and its supporters to rescind the canon and yield to Rome. Although this never happened, the aftermath of Chalcedon demonstrated to the church of Constantinople and to the imperial court just how crucial the approval of Rome really was for settling ecclesiastical dissension.

Shortly after the council ended, Marcian, who supported the two-nature doctrine championed by his wife Pulcheria and by the apostolic see, also supported the expansive jurisdictional privileges claimed by the church of Constantinople. He found no contradiction in subscribing to the doctrine of Rome while rejecting its interpretation of the canons, because he thought that an ecumenical council of bishops had done the same. Now that Rome's view of doctrine had triumphed and the *Tome* had been accepted, he asked Leo to express his gratitude and to confirm this decision with prayers: "the most devout bishops of the whole world subject to our rule were summoned to Chalcedon, and after discussion and much argument the true faith prevailed, and all assented to the teaching of the letter of your holiness, just as the truth demanded … may your holiness prompt the divine majesty in all your prayers to destroy the enemy."[95] Convinced that the doctrinal question

[94] For the view that the 28th canon did not contradict the Roman primacy, see de Halleux, "Le décret Chalcédonien sur les prérogatives de la nouvelle Rome," pp. 288, 321, who perhaps goes too far in asserting that Rome recognized that Constantinople exercised a primacy of honor in the East.

[95] Leo, *Ep.* 100.2; *Epistula Marciani imp. ad Leonem papam* (d. 18 m. Dec. a. 451). ACO II, 4, p. 167. Translation in trans. Price, Gaddis, *The acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, vol. 3, p. 137.

was related to the legal one, Marcian thought that the council had also legitimately acknowledged the bishop of Constantinople as holding the second place after Rome and as exercising equal privileges. He failed to perceive how contentious it truly was for Paschasinus, Lucentius, and Boniface, and for the apostolic see.

The objections the legates raised were expressed vividly and contentiously by the bishop of Constantinople, Anatolius. The scene he described was one of confusion and turmoil, in which the legates "disrupted the council, upset the assembly and spread confusion, by spurning this see and doing everything productive of outrage against [Anatolius] and the most holy church of Constantinople."[96] His strategy in portraying such a tumult, which finds little confirmation in the concilar acts, was simply to undermine Leo's confidence in his legates. That he attempted to do so even while he ostensibly submitted to Roman authority illustrates his incapacity to understand precisely what diplomacy required. He thought that he merely had to claim that "[t]he see of Constantinople has as its father your apostolic throne and has joined itself to you in a special way,"[97] in order for Leo to conclude that Rome, being the 'father' of his see that reviewed every case that Anatolius sent there for confirmation, should facilitate a kind of paternal acceptance. His purpose was to convince Leo that he and the council had sent him the canon "in order to receive from [him] approval and confirmation,"[98] not simply to announce to him the results of their decision. By these ingratiating words he meant to convey that he had yielded to Leo's authority, rather than subverted it in the manner that the legates had suggested. That this submission to Rome did not include his recognizing the authority of the legates further illustrates how insincere and manipulative the gesture really was. Because he did not acknowledge the presence of Leo in his representatives, he did not recognize their capacity to make decisions that he might accept as legitimate. That is why he asked Leo to respond to each point that the legates had raised.

Anatolius' strategy backfired. Leo resented the implication that his legates were anything less than legitimate representatives of the apostolic see. Lucentius had fulfilled the duties assigned to him, he said in a

[96] Leo, *Ep.* 101.5. Translation in trans. Price, Gaddis, *The acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, vol. 3, p. 141.

[97] Leo, ibid. Translation in trans. Price, Gaddis, *The acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, vol. 3, p. 141.

[98] Leo, ibid. Translation in ibid.

letter to Marcian (22 May 452), and "must not be thought to have failed in his duty: it was rather the occasion that failed him."[99] The course of events surrounding canon 28 had unfolded, as Leo saw it, according to the self-interested designs of a single individual. It was not the culmination of more than seventy years of jurisdictional practices, as the church of Constantinople had argued. Nor was it the confirmation of the canon passed by the Council of Constantinople, where, as Leo put it, certain bishops sixty years ago [sic] changed the canons.[100] For the current turmoil in the churches, Anatolius' "spirit of self-promotion" ('spiritus ambitionis') was solely to blame:

> When my brethren and fellow bishops who were present as my representatives took issue with him, (he said to the emperor) he [i.e., Anatolius] might have been spurred at least by their opposition to desist from his unlawful craving. For both the summit of your piety and his own letter affirm that the legates of the apostolic see resisted him, as was proper, with the most just opposition, so that his presumption was all the more inexcusable for not restraining itself when rebuked.[101]

With Pulcheria, Leo was even more forthright in arguing that his contempt for the bishop was rooted in the fact that Anatolius' ambition had exceeded his rank and had resulted in a campaign of coercion, in which certain bishops were forced to assent to the canon.[102] By this strategy Leo separated canon 28 from the work of the general council and attributed it to the manipulative plots of Anatolius. His purpose in doing so was to protect the principle of apostolicity and to undermine the secular argument offered by Constantinople in support of its calculated ascent to power in the region. The conclusion he wished everyone to reach was that canon 28 was not the legitimate codification of a long-standing jurisdictional practice, but the illegitimate product of one man's desire for personal advancement.

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[99] Leo, *Ep.* 104.5, Jaffé 481; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Marcianum imp.* (d. 22 m. Maii a. 452). ACO II, 4, p. 57; Translation in trans. Price, Gaddis, *The acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, vol. 3, p. 145.

[100] Leo, *Ep.* 105.2, Jaffé 482; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Pulcheriam augustam* (d. 22 m. Maii a. 452). ACO II, 4, p. 58.

[101] Leo, *Ep.* 104.4, Jaffé 481; ACO II, 4, pp. 56–57; Translation in trans. Price, Gaddis, *The acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, vol. 3, p. 145. 'cum illi fratres et coepiscopi mei qui vice mea aderant, obviarent, ab illicito appetitu ex eorum saltim contradictione cessasset. nam et vestrae pietatis apices et ipsius scripta declarant legatos sedis apostolicae, sicut oportuit, contradictione justissima restitisse, ut inexcusabilior esset praesumptio quae se nec increpata cohiberet.'

[102] Leo, *Ep.* 105.2, Jaffé 482; ACO II, 4, pp. 57–58.

This portrayal of the bishop as a self-serving, ambitious upstart was fueled by the claim that he had been consecrated by a heretic and had converted to orthodoxy merely to secure his current position as bishop of the imperial city. In the light of such dubious credentials, any further offenses that Leo identified were to be seen as intolerable, and any recognition of him as legitimate was to be seen as a great indulgence on the part of the apostolic see. Although Anatolius had failed to adopt the modest demeanor that Leo had expected, we are told that he continued to recognize Anatolius as legitimate and orthodox because the emperor had favored him.[103] It was in this context that Anatolius' so-called disregard for the ecclesiastical law was construed as the last straw in his barrage of continuing misconduct. Although he may have violated the canons, Anatolius was never portrayed as undermining a system of justice that did not depend for its legitimacy on the actions of a single individual, but as brazenly dismissing it, thereby compromising his own capacity to serve as a patriarch. The consequence of Anatolius' disobedience was contained by limiting it to the personal tragedy of his own incompetence.

The Roman primacy, and the theory of apostolicity on which it rested, was similarly incapable of being undermined by Anatolius' actions. Leo's argument was based on two related principles: Rome was first among the patriarchal sees because the rock of Peter and his divinely-given justice was its stable foundation. And among cities, Constantinople was glorious because it was the royal seat of imperial power. Taken together this meant that religious and secular institutions were unequal because each had a different and incomparable rationale ('ratio') for its glory. Marcian was to convince Anatolius that this same reasoning applied to the fundamental differences among the patriarchal sees: "let him not disdain an imperial city because he cannot make it an apostolic see, and let him on no account hope that he can become greater through wronging others."[104] To make his case persuasive to an emperor who might be moved more by the concrete certainty of the canons than by the assertion of apostolicity, Leo turned to canon six of Nicaea, the same canon that we encountered in session sixteen of the acts. I suggested that the legates introduced an interpolated Latin version of the canon, which differed from the Greek in its assertion of

[103] Leo, *Ep.* 104.2, Jaffé 481; ACO II, 4, p. 56.

[104] Ibid. 104.3. Translation in trans. Price, Gaddis, *The acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, vol. 3, p. 144.

the Roman primacy, but followed the Greek in making Alexandria the second see and Antioch the third. Leo may have had in mind either the Latin or the Greek version of the canon when he said, "the privileges of the churches, having been bestowed by the canons of the holy fathers and defined by the decrees of the venerable council of Nicaea, cannot be overturned by any unscrupulousness or changed by any innovation."[105] Both versions would have sufficed to make the point that Anatolius, in ratifying canon 28, had on his own initiative plotted to overturn the Nicene decrees. To prevent that from happening was the responsibility of Leo, who would be culpable "if the rules of the fathers' enactment, which were drawn up under the direction of God's spirit at the council of Nicaea for the government of the whole church, are violated with any connivance on my part (which God forbid), and if the wishes of a single brother weigh more with me than the common good of the entire house of the Lord."[106] His self-appointed task was to protect the church against the manipulative plots of Anatolius.

Leo was selling two points to the imperial court. Not only was Anatolius the upstart bishop whose pretensions for the church of Constantinople violated the canons, but Nicaea was the paragon of councils and its canons were to be followed universally. Only then would there be "undisturbed peace and complete harmony in all the churches," and only then would there be "no disagreements about rank, no litigation about ordination, no doubts about privileges, no fights about taking that which belongs to another."[107] The two points were related insofar as the ecclesiastical law that Leo envisioned was to be implemented only by those who were free of self-interest and whose characters were just. This was the 'true love of justice' that Leo thought governed the administration and interpretation of ecclesiastical law.[108] Because Anatolius had infused that law with his ambition and arro-

[105] Ibid. Translation in trans. Price, Gaddis, *The acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, vol. 3, p. 144.

[106] Ibid. 'si paternarum regulae sanctionum quae in synodo Nicaena ad totius ecclesiae regimen spiritu dei instruente sunt conditae, me, quod absit, connivente violentur, et major sit apud me unius fratris voluntas quam universae domus domini communis utilitas.' See also Leo, *Ep.* 105.2, Jaffé 482; ACO II, 4, p. 58, where he told Pulcheria that anyone who dared to undermine Nicaea diminished himself, but did not impair its decrees.

[107] Ibid.; ACO II, 4, p. 58. 'per universas ecclesias tranquilla erit pax et firma concordia, nullae de mensura honorum dissensiones, nullae de ordinationibus lites, nullae de privilegiis ambiguitates, nulla erunt de alieni usurpatione certamina.'

[108] See Leo's instructions to Ravennius, the bishop of Arles, in Chapter 2.1.

gance, he was incapable of implementing it correctly.[109] The result of his improper conduct was "[to] increase the dignity of one man so as to challenge the primacy of the metropolitans," said Leo, "[it was] to bring a war of new disorder into peaceful provinces that were long ago put in order by the moderation of the holy council of Nicaea; [it was] to undo the decrees of the venerable fathers by alleging the consent of certain bishops."[110] Like the eastern bishops, Marcian and Pulcheria supported the privileges that Chalcedon bestowed upon the see of Constantinople because they thought that it merely ratified what had already been decided legitimately by the Council of Constantinople. They did not think that Anatolius was the lone architect of canon 28 that Leo painted him to be.

Anatolius was walking a fine line as far as Leo was concerned. Among the same batch of letters that he sent to the imperial court (22 May 452) was a letter to Anatolius. Though cordial on its surface, the hint of irony was unmistakable. Just as Leo commended him for subscribing to orthodoxy, he reminded him of his irregular consecration, which Leo had overlooked in order to restore harmony after the catastrophe of the Robber Synod, Anatolius having proven himself to be "promoted by the loving kindness ('benignitas') of God and not by the judgment of men."[111] The implication was that Leo had forgiven one transgression, his irregular consecration, but that he was not prepared to forgive another, especially one that had originated from arrogance and self-promotion.[112] This thinly-veiled threat that Anatolius either renounce his ambitions or be excommunicated was related to Leo's view of Nicaea as the one true council. He told the imperial court that Anatolius had implicitly jeopardized that council when he consecrated the bishop of Antioch and assigned Constantinople the second place

[109] Leo, *Ep.* 105.2, Jaffé 482; ACO II, 4, p. 58. "What will satisfy him if the magnificence and renown of so great a city is not enough?" asked Leo. The law itself remained unharmed by Anatolius' improper interpretation.

[110] Ibid.

[111] Leo, *Ep.* 106.1, Jaffé 483; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Anatolium CPolitanum* (d. 22 m. Maii a. 452). ACO II, 4, p. 59.

[112] Ibid.; ACO II, 4, pp. 59–60. "For a Catholic, and particularly a priest of the Lord, must neither be involved in any error nor corrupted by any cupidity … the many enticements and the many vanities of this world are to be resisted, so that the perfection of true self-discipline may be attained … because the mind greedy for power knows neither to abstain from things forbidden nor to enjoy things permitted." Translation in trans. Price, Gaddis, *The acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, vol. 3, p. 146.

after Rome, thereby forcing the see of Alexandria to forego its privilege of second place and the see of Antioch its privilege of third.[113]

Four propositions supported his argument. First, the truth is not a democratic principle. No matter how many bishops voted at a council, and no matter how many ecclesiastical judgments they passed, they did not have the authority to alter the Nicene decrees. Legitimacy, in other words, was not a function of size. Leo was alluding, of course, to the great numbers present at the Council of Chalcedon, which, with its more than 500 bishops in attendance, was significantly larger than Nicaea.

Second, the topics to be addressed at a council are to be settled before the council begins. The Council of Chalcedon had been convened, as Leo saw it, only to resolve the questions of doctrine that had arisen due to the Robber Synod and the numerous assaults upon the orthodox bishops and clergy that resulted from it. To consider any other topic was to misuse the conciliar gathering in order "to induce by misleading, or compel by intimidating, into assent with itself brethren who had been summoned purely to deal with the faith."[114] This argument was refined and made into a papal decretal one year later in his letter to Maximus, the bishop of Antioch: "Whatever is brought before bishops for examination beyond the particular cases [that come before] synodal councils can be discussed with some justification, as long as nothing was decided on the matter by the holy fathers at Nicaea."[115] The closest precedent to support that claim was the decision made under different circumstances by Constantine at Nicaea and by Theodosius at the Council of Ephesus I, which prevented certain legal disputes from coming before councils. Both emperors simply wished to protect the conciliar bishops from being distracted and harassed by unrelated litigation.

Third, the canons of Nicaea, which are permanent and universal, are to serve the common good and not private interests. In criticizing Anatolius for appropriating the canons of Nicaea for his private use,

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[113] Ibid. 106.5; ACO II, 4, p. 61. "The rights of provincial primates are not to be overturned," said Leo, "nor are metropolitan bishops to be defrauded of privileges granted long ago." Translation in trans. Price, Gaddis, *The acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, vol. 3, p. 149.

[114] Ibid. 106.3; ACO II, 4, p. 60. Translation in trans. Price, Gaddis, *The acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, vol. 3, p. 147.

[115] Leo, *Ep.* 119.5, Jaffé 495; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Maximum Antiochenum* (d. 11 m. Iun. a. 453). ACO II, 4, p. 74.

Leo was not suggesting that the canons should never be interpreted. He was arguing that correct interpretation was a function of the character of the interpreter, as he had argued in the case of Ravennius. Laws set limits that prevented (among other things) one see from invading the rights of another. To interpret those limits properly, each "is to exercise himself in the breadth of love to the best of his ability within proper and lawful limits … [by practicing] the virtue of humility rather than being puffed up with the spirit of ambition."[116] The implication was that Anatolius benefited greatly from the canons of Nicaea and should, therefore, respect them. What at first glance seemed to be an argument drawn from universal principles was more deeply, if implicitly, utilitarian.

Finally, conciliar decrees must be sanctioned by Rome in order to be valid. To make this point, Leo presented the same argument he had used several times before, only for Anatolius he put it in language much more severe. "Cease to disquiet with improper petitions the most pious ears of Christian princes … For your persuasiveness is in no way whatever assisted by the subscription of certain bishops given, as you claim, sixty [sic] years ago, and never brought to the knowledge of the apostolic see by your predecessors."[117] The canons passed by the Council of Constantinople were implicitly demoted to the status of a petition ('petitio'), no more exalted and no more legitimate than the petitions that Anatolius was currently filing with the emperor. That this 'petition' had never been brought to the attention of the apostolic see implied that it was "futile from the start and [had] long fallen into abeyance … [only to be propped up] by supports that are tardy and ineffectual, by extracting from the brethren the appearance of consent."[118] His claim was significant. He was suggesting that Rome might not recognize the canons passed by the Council of Constantinople, the same council that had silenced the neo-Arians and had defined the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.[119] How far such a claim might extend he did not say.

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[116] Leo, *Ep.* 106.4, Jaffé 483; ACO II, 4, p. 61; Translation in trans. Price, Gaddis, *The acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, vol. 3, p. 148.

[117] Ibid. 106.5; Translation in trans. Price, Gaddis, *The acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, vol. 3, p. 148.

[118] Ibid; Translation in trans. Price, Gaddis, *The acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, vol. 3, p. 148.

[119] de Halleux sees the differences between Rome and Constantinople residing mainly in the authority to be accorded the Council of Constantinople. de Halleux, "Le décret Chalcédonien sur les prérogatives de la nouvelle Rome," p. 296.

Although Leo claimed that Anatolius' "ambition" and his "disregard of the canons" were the driving force behind canon 28, there was another even more plausible and less condemning reason that Anatolius, along with the rest of the conciliar bishops, might have wished to secure the second place of honor for his see. Dioscorus, the bishop of Alexandria who was responsible for the Robber Synod, had wreaked such havoc upon the church of Constantinople that Anatolius may have thought it politically expedient to make certain that scenario could never be repeated. If Constantinople were the second see, then its bishop would have the authority to define orthodoxy over a vast region and to exercise its influence over much of the East. Moved to third place among the patriarchal sees, the bishop of Alexandria would be divested of the power he needed to intervene in ecclesiastical politics outside of Egypt. While the result was the same—the elevation of Constantinople at the expense of Alexandria, Antioch, and the other patriarchal sees—the motive was different from the sort of competition with Rome that has most often been attributed to the church of Constantinople.[120] Leo surely understood the complexity of their position with respect to the eastern churches when he said that the see of Alexandria was not to lose the dignity it earned through Mark, nor was its splendor to be obscured by Dioscorus, "for sees are one thing, those who preside in them another; and the great honor of each individual is his own integrity."[121] By continuing to attack Anatolius' character, however, Leo obscured the fact that this quest for power might be the reflection of, and eventually the catalyst for, a deeper rift within the eastern churches.

Nearly one year later (March 453) Leo was forced to acknowledge that rupture, and his unwitting contribution to it. Monks, opponents of Chalcedon, were rioting in Palestine because they thought that Rome had never ratified the Chalcedonian decrees. Leo was deeply concerned for the future of the council. Although he had rejected canon 28, he had, many times over, approved of the council's definition of orthodoxy: "This [i.e., approval] you could have ascertained not only from the fact of the achievement of most blessed unanimity," he wrote to the council, "but also from the letter which after the return of my

[120] See Ibid., p. 296.

[121] Leo, *Ep.* 106.5, Jaffé 483; ACO II, 4, p. 61; Translation in trans. Price, Gaddis, *The acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, vol. 3, p. 148; 'aliud enim sunt sedes, aliud praesidentes, et magnus unicuique honor est integritas sua.'

representatives I sent to the bishop of the city of Constantinople—if he had been willing to show you the reply of the apostolic see."[122] With Julian of Cios, his papal representative stationed in Constantinople, Leo expressed his disdain for Anatolius openly: "If [Anatolius] had wanted to publish [my letter], it would have been abundantly clear from it how joyfully I approved of what the synod had decided concerning the faith. But because in it I refrained from giving the sort of response that his ambition desired, he preferred to ignore what I thought about the brethren's resolutions, lest what I put down in writing in defense of the inviolable authority of the Nicene canons be known at the same time."[123] Leo was saying that Anatolius had preferred to conceal his assent to the council, no matter how damaging to ecclesiastical relations such an omission might be, than to publicize this rebuke from Rome.[124] No problem in the East, not even the riots of Palestine, was too remote from Constantinople, too embedded in the ecclesiastical power politics of the East, or too extensive in its scope to blame on Anatolius.

To dispel the riots, Leo wrote letters to the imperial court (21 March 453) in which he assured Marcian and Pulcheria of his unambiguous assent to Chalcedon.[125] Strikingly absent was any direct reference to the controversial canon. Perhaps because he understood that to save the doctrinal definitions of the council he had to renounce his objections to the canon, or perhaps because he thought that the emperor had come to accept his point of view, Leo simply stopped discussing it. That is not to say that he changed his view of Nicaea or his perception of Anatolius. He continued to insist that the Nicene decrees

[122] Leo, *Ep.* 114.1, Jaffé 490; *Epistula Leonis papae ad concilium Chalcedonense* (d. 21 m. Mart. a. 453). ACO II, 4, p. 70; Translation in trans. Price, Gaddis, *The acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, vol. 3, p. 153.

[123] Leo, *Ep.* 117.1, Jaffé 492; *Epistula Leonis papae ad eundem* (d. 2 m. Apr. a. 453). ACO II, 4, p. 69. 'si eas publicare voluisset, abunde ex ipsis potuisset agnosci quanto gaudio ea quae de fide synodus sanxerat approbarem. sed quia in eisdem continebatur quale responsum accepisset ambitio, ignorari voluit quod de fraternis constitutionibus sentiebam, ne simul cognosceretur quod pro inviolabili Nicaenorum canonum auctoritate rescripseram.'

[124] Leo, *Ep.* 115.1, Jaffé 491; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Marcianum imp.* (d. 21 m. Mart. a. 453). ACO II, 4, p. 67.

[125] Leo, *Ep.* 116.2, Jaffé 492; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Pulcheriam augustam* (d. 21 m. Mart. a. 453). ACO II, 4, p. 68. Leo told Pulcheria that he did what the emperor had wanted him to do, i.e., send his letter confirming the decrees of the council to all the bishops who had participated in Chalcedon.

could not be undermined by Anatolius' vanity and ambition.[126] This suggested that Anatolius, individually and on his own initiative, had only temporarily diverted the universal authority of councils, which was to be used for the common good, in order to serve his illegitimate ends. Leo had been developing this theme since the beginning of the controversy: "Let vicious ambition covet nothing belonging to another, nor let anyone seek his own increase through injuring another. For however much vainglorious pride builds on extorted assent and thinks that its depredations can be strengthened through talking of councils, whatever differs from the canons of the aforesaid fathers will be null and void."[127] By appealing to the authority of the councils of Constantinople and of Chalcedon, Anatolius and his supporters had put Leo in the difficult position of having to articulate (by the four points I mentioned above) why the canons of Nicaea should prevail over those of later councils. Although the conciliar theology that resulted excluded Anatolius, it warmly embraced the emperor: "my joy is rightly augmented when I learn that it is your pleasure most religiously that both the Nicene faith should keep its firmness ('firmitas') and the privileges of the churches should remain undiminished ('inlibata')."[128] To question the emperor's commitment to Nicaea would have not only undermined Leo's broader strategy to isolate Anatolius, but would have introduced an unwelcome rupture between Rome and the imperial court.

There was reason for Leo to be optimistic. Even while the bishops of Constantinople continued to exercise privileges consistent with the canon, they did so without appealing to it. It is telling, therefore, that not only do many Latin manuscripts of the council omit the canon, but several Greek and Arabic canon collections, such as the Greek collection by John of Antioch and the Arabic by Josephus Aegyptius, do as well, recording only twenty-seven canons for the council instead of the traditional thirty.[129] The disparity between theory and practice had already caused problems towards the end of the fifth century when

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[126] Leo, *Ep.* 114.2, Jaffé 491; *Epistula Leonis papae ad concilium Chalcedonense* (d. 21 m. Mart. a. 453). ACO II, 4, p. 71.

[127] Ibid. 'nihil alienum improbus ambitus concupiscat … et appetitus suos conciliorum aestimet nomine roborandos, infirmum atque irritum erit quidquid a praedictorum patrum canonibus discreparit.' Translation in trans. Price, Gaddis, *The acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, vol. 3, pp. 153–154.

[128] Leo, *Ep.* 115.1, Jaffé 491; ACO II, 4, p. 67; Translation in trans. Price, Gaddis, *The acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, vol. 3, p. 152.

[129] Hefele, *A History of the Councils*, p. 420.

Acacius of Constantinople in 472 asserted extensive privileges for his see, whereupon pope Felix III (pope, 483–492) deposed him.[130] The Acacian schism that ensued was the occasion for pope Gelasius' (pope, 492–496) letter *Ad episcopos Dardaniae*, which elaborated upon the wide-reaching authority of the Roman see. In it he rejected the argument that Acacius held special prerogatives because he was the bishop of an imperial city, for "the emperor," he reasoned, "had also resided for many years in Ravenna, Milan, Sirmium, and Trier," and those sees had always been subordinate to Rome.[131] The accident of secular rule did not suffice to make the church located there a patriarchal see. Not until the Quinisextum council, in Trullo (692), did the church of Constantinople explicitly renew the canon. Having forged a union with the Greek church only eleven years earlier, Rome wisely remained silent. Only as a result of the fourth Lateran Synod, which Pope Innocent III (pope, 1198–1216) held in 1215 eleven years after the fourth Crusade, did Rome acknowledge that the see of Constantinople was second to the apostolic see.

The controversy over the relative privileges to be granted the patriarchal sees reveals that the authority of Rome was precarious. It was to be negotiated through a strategy of argumentation that made the principles of apostolicity the foundation for a Christian universalism that was as relevant in the eastern context as it was in the West. While the church of Constantinople implicitly recognized that authority by seeking the approval of the apostolic see, it also implicitly rejected that authority by continuing to exercise the same extensive privileges accorded to it by the Council of Constantinople (381) in canon 3. That is because Rome had no means of compelling the eastern churches to comply with its judgments.

It was important, nonetheless, for the bishops of Constantinople to maintain the illusion of being submissive to Rome. The idea that Rome held a special place among the patriarchal sees was as deeply ingrained in their fiction of maintaining a unified church as it was in Leo's. To disregard the authority of Rome was, at the time of Chalcedon, to risk toppling a hierarchy that connected the eastern and western churches

[130] Ibid. p. 448.

[131] Gelasius, *Ep.* 13, PL 59, 71. Recall that Eutyches had been operating on just that assumption when, soon after the bishop of Constantinople had deposed him, he wrote to Peter Chrysologus, the bishop of Ravenna, hoping that he, Peter, as the bishop of what had been an imperial city, might have the authority to reinstate him.

in what they hoped would be a common interpretation of the world. Each legal decision and doctrinal decree was to be seen as part of a larger, universal conception of ecclesiastical justice and orthodoxy, which in Rome's view derived from the divine justice that Peter represented, and in Constantinople's view derived from a democratic system of ecclesiastical decision-making implemented by an ecumenical council of bishops. The different contexts in which ecclesiastical unity was construed shaped the complicated relationship that continued to unfold between Rome and the East in the post-Chalcedonian discussions.

CHAPTER SEVEN

STRIVING FOR UNITY AFTER CHALCEDON

In the months and years following the Council of Chalcedon, dissension among its adversaries extended from the faction in Constantinople, which consisted of Eutyches and his followers, to the monks and clergy in Palestine, Egypt, and Syria. That Marcian had passed a law making it a secular crime to dispute the council's doctrinal and disciplinary decrees made little difference to such opponents.[1] Strategically, they used Leo's failure one year later to ratify the council in order to support the legitimacy of their theological views. Because Rome had rejected it, they argued that the council did not have the authority to render a binding decision in ecclesiastical doctrine and discipline.

Marcian was troubled by the possibility that some might find such an argument persuasive and blamed Leo's failure to send a papal letter confirming the acts of the council for the growing anti-Chalcedonian movement. To resolve the problem, he urged Leo to compose such a document, as soon as possible, to be read publicly in the churches, "[through which all will know] that what was accomplished in the holy synod has been confirmed by your blessedness."[2] Moved by the emperor's plea, Leo replied quickly, assuring him that "sacrilegious error will be deprived of all its power … if the fact that the apostolic see has approved the definitions of the holy synod of Chalcedon [is published] throughout all the churches."[3] Although the controversy over canon 28 had left him wary of the council, the fact that it had subscribed to his *Tome* made him willing, though with some reservation, to approve it.[4] His intention henceforth was to prevent its decrees from being undermined by the arguments of its opponents.

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[1] Marcian, *Edictum Marciani imp.* (d. 7 m. Febr. a. 452) (*de prohibitis disputationibus*) ACO II, I, 3, pp. 120–121.

[2] Leo, *Ep.* 110; *Epistula Marciani imp. ad Leonem papam* (d. 15 m. Feb. a. 453). ACO II, I, 2, p. 61.

[3] Leo, *Ep.* 115.1; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Marcianum imp.* (d. 21 m. Mart. a. 453) ACO II, 4, pp. 67–68.

[4] For Leo's formal approval of the council see his *Ep.* 114; *Epistula Leonis papae ad*

Through his regular correspondence with the eastern imperial court, with Julian of Cios (his papal representative residing in Constantinople), and with the patriarchal bishops of the East, a picture emerges of the tactics Leo used, and the relationships he created, to support his vision of a unified, Chalcedonian church. To what extent he failed or succeeded should be measured not only in the light of the eventual secession of the non-Chalcedonian churches, but in the light of the deepening sense of self-understanding that developed among the churches that subscribed to Chalcedon. His ideology of Christian unity, which was forged through the avenues of well-crafted argument and personal relationships, was, in other words, the lasting outcome of this failed attempt to build a consensus.

1. *Eliciting the support of the eastern imperial court*

Leo's endorsement of the council came nearly too late (453) to preserve its authority, which was being challenged not only by the followers of Eutyches in Constantinople, but by another faction of single-nature proponents, monks, who had organized in Palestine. Well after the fact, Leo learned that one group of Palestinian monks who opposed the council had rioted, killing several priests and bishops. The outbreak of violence, which had been recently suppressed by the emperor, had been incited by false translations of the *Tome*, forgeries by which Leo's adversaries exaggerated his two-nature language, making him sound like a Nestorian: "[I have learned from many sources]," wrote Leo, "that … a kind of offense … has been committed through my interpreters who, it seems, being either ignorant or malicious, have made you understand [some of my statements] in a different sense from what I meant, because they are incapable of translating Latin into Greek speech accurately and properly."[5] With no small amount of irony (these were, after all, the same monks who had murdered several people in their zeal for the faith), he thanked them for recognizing that their version of the *Tome* had been falsified, and for refusing to believe "what he himself despises."[6]

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concilium Chalcedonense (d. 21 m. Mart. a. 453). ACO II, 4, pp. 70–71 (ratifies Chalcedon, but refuses to accept canon 28).

[5] Leo, *Ep.* 124.1; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Palaestinenses*. ACO II, 4, pp. 159–163.

[6] Ibid. (i.e., 'ipse detestor')

His true sentiment gradually unfolded throughout the course of this doctrinal letter. In it he instructed the monks in the finer points of Incarnational theology and then chastened them severely for violating such virtues of their profession as meekness, quietness, patience, and tranquility, thereby igniting the Nestorianism and Eutychianism that had already been condemned. To offset the conciliatory tone with which he began, Leo implied that it was not the mistranslations, but the violence and disorder of their rioting that fueled the burgeoning heresy. For their crimes and disciplinary infractions, leniency and instruction were recommended, nonetheless, as the appropriate method for correcting them. Pulcheria was, therefore, praised for her display of moderation, by which she "deemed it worthy to refrain from punishing the foolish ignorance of the monks and to chastise them with teaching instead … that they may, with many tears, be washed … of the nefarious murderers."[7] She had presumably sent to the monks a theological tract that has not survived, in which she outlined the major tenets of Chalcedonian orthodoxy.

To pacify the monks further, Leo wrote to Eudocia, the wife of Theodosius II who had been living in Palestine, possibly since as early as 444. She whom Leo presumed to support the Chalcedonian cause was asked to teach the monks to subscribe to that view of the Incarnation.[8] Her decision to live in Palestine was, he thought, an advantage in this regard, because its sacred sites offered graphic evidence for the various stages in the life of Christ, not only for his miracles, but for his experiences as a human being. Living there, in other words, made her uniquely qualified to explain to the monks, by means of the visual cues that surrounded her, that Christ was not only true God, but also a true human being.

Little is known of what Eudocia actually believed in. As the former wife of the emperor, she may have subscribed to the same version of Eutyches' single-nature christology that was to win a short-lived acceptance (due, in part, to the support of her husband) at the Robber Synod in 449.[9] Quite contrary to Leo's intentions, she may indeed have

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[7] Leo, *Ep.* 116.1; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Pulcherian augustam* (d. 21 m. Mart. a. 453) ACO II, 4, pp. 68–69.

[8] Leo, *Ep.* 123.1; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Eudociam augustam* (d. 15 m. Iun. a. 453) ACO II, 4, p. 77; see Jalland, p. 210, and Bury, *Later Roman Empire*. On Eudocia, and her animosity toward the imperial court and her willingness to upset Chalcedon, see Jalland, p. 322.

[9] See Holum, *Theodosian Empresses*, p. 184, who says that Eudocia was probably

been responsible for urging the monks to rebel against Chalcedon (as we learn from Leo's letter to Julian discussed below).[10] How seriously Leo considered this possibility is difficult to say. That he wrote a long, dogmatic letter to the monks of Palestine, in which he laid out clearly the christology of Chalcedon,[11] suggests that he did not trust Eudocia alone to correct their theological views.

When the problems in Palestine were tentatively resolved in January 454, Leo did not write to Eudocia, as he might have given her residency there, but to Marcian, thanking him for restoring catholic unity.[12] A willing negotiator on behalf of Leo, Marcian had reproached the monks and archimandrites who were responsible for the anti-Chalcedonian uprisings, criticizing them for rioting in the city of Aelios (i.e., Jerusalem) and for subscribing to christological views that promoted the beliefs of the heretics Valentinian and Apollinaris.[13] They had supported a rebellious monk named Theodosius, who had stated publicly that Chalcedon taught Christians incorrectly to worship two Christs, two sons, and two persons, in the manner of Nestorius. By making such inflammatory statements against the council, Theodosius had incited the crowds of monks and hermits who heard his speeches to commit murder, burn down houses, seize bishops, and appoint in their place those who held views sympathetic to his own.[14] The problem was so serious that Pulcheria had written to the archimandrite and monks of Aelios to convince them that Chalcedon did not promote Nestorianism, as Theodosius and his followers claimed, but rather confirmed the definitions and decrees of Nicaea, to which she and her husband subscribed.[15] This intervention succeeded in placating the monks, who then permitted Juvenal, the bishop of Jerusalem who had voted

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jealous of Pulcheria, and for that reason opposed Chalcedon, which Pulcheria had championed successfully. Ibid., p. 222.

[10] Leo, *Ep.* 117.3; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Iulianum episc. Coi* (d. 21 m. Mart. a. 453) ACO II, 4, pp. 69–70.

[11] Leo, *Ep.* 124; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Palaestinenses*. ACO II, 4, pp. 159–163.

[12] Leo, *Ep.* 126; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Marcianum* (d. 9 m. Ian. a. 454) ACO II, 4, pp. 81–82.

[13] *Epistula Marciani imp. ad archimandritas Aelienses* (a. 453 ineunte) (CPG 9038) ACO II, I, 3, pp. 124–127.

[14] *Epistula Marciani imp. ad Macarium episc. et archimandritam ceterosque monachos Sinaitas* (a. 453 uneunte) (CPG 9040) ACO II, I, 3, pp. 131–132; *Epistula Marciani imp. ad synodum Palaestinensem* (CPG 9041) ACO II, I, 3, pp. 133–134.

[15] *Epistula Pulcheriae augustae ad monachos Aelienses* (a. 453 ineunte) (CPG 9039) ACO II, I, 3, pp. 128–129; *Epistula Pulcheriae augustae ad Bassam abbatissam Aeliensem* (CPG 9042) ACO II, I, 3, pp. 135–136.

against Flavian at the Robber Synod, to return to his see. Although Leo was grateful for the resolution that Pulcheria had orchestrated, he was ambivalent about the return of Juvenal, who, he thought, had contributed to the problems in Palestine by failing to oppose the Eutychians whom he had previously supported.[16]

Anti-Chalcedonian activity was also flourishing in Egypt. Proterius, who was ostensibly a Chalcedonian, had been installed as bishop of Alexandria in 451 amid dissension among those who continued to favor the anti-Chalcedonian views of Dioscorus.[17] Given the current state of civil and ecclesiastical unrest there, Leo was relieved that the new bishop was at least outwardly sympathetic to the council. The problem was that many of the clergy and people were not. To demonstrate to the people that Leo's teachings merely confirmed the rule of faith and were congenial to such orthodox Egyptian fathers as Athanasius, Theophilus, and Cyril, Proterius was asked to read aloud in the churches selections from their writings as well as from the *Tome*.[18] His congregations were supposed to conclude that all these selections, as well as the council that he supported, were consistent statements of the orthodox faith. In return for such efforts, Leo assured him that Anatolius' encroachments on the privileges of the Alexandrian see were being resisted assiduously by preserving the authority that had been assigned to it in canon 6 of Nicaea.[19] There the bishop of Alexandria was charged with administering the comprovincial bishops of Egypt and Libya at a time when the Meletian schism threatened to dissolve the churches into factions. The strong central authority that Nicaea had put into place to resolve such problems in the fourth century also served Leo's purposes in the fifth. Proterius was to exercise the broad jurisdictional authority granted to him by Nicaea in order to impose the doctrinal decrees of Chalcedon upon Egyptians who, as dyed-in-the-wool supporters of a Nicene and Cyrillian fundamentalism, were more inclined to follow the one-nature doctrines of Dioscorus and Eutyches than the two-nature christology that Chalcedon proclaimed.

Leo must have had his doubts about the depth of Proterius' commitment to Chalcedonian orthodoxy. From his letter to Marcian we learn

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[16] Leo, *Ep.* 139.1; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Iuuenalem Hierosolymitanum* (d. 4 m. Sept. a. 454) (CPG 9070) ACO II, 4, pp. 91–93.

[17] See Evagrius, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, 2.5.

[18] Leo, *Ep.* 129.2; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Proterium Alexandrinum* (d. 10 m. Mart. a. 454) ACO II, 4, pp. 84–86.

[19] Ibid. 129.3.

that the Alexandrian bishop, whose support for Chalcedon could not be relied upon, had to be encouraged to promote its cause.[20] Elected to the bishopric only after he pledged his fidelity to the council, Proterius was, perhaps, a recent convert to Chalcedonianism who saw in the current political climate an opportunity for personal advancement. A lone and provisional supporter of Chalcedon amid a see of anti-Chalcedonians whose faith was rooted in Nicene fundamentalism, he owed his ecclesiastical position to imperial patronage. Given the situation in Egypt, which had prevailed ever since the death of Cyril (in 444), this was about as much support as Leo could have hoped for. The best he could do was to use the situation to his advantage. Because Proterius, an imperial appointee, was so vulnerable to the emperor's demands, Leo assigned to Marcian the task of urging him and the other bishops and clergy of Egypt to reread the writings of the Alexandrian theologians and to study the gospels in an effort to learn from them the correct understanding of the mystery of Christ's birth, Passion, and Resurrection.[21] The Chalcedonian view of the Incarnation was to emerge from such a study. Concerning his *Tome*, Leo was more circumspect. In an attempt to discredit it, certain followers of Eutyches had falsified the text, just as the Palestinian monks had done before, by making it appear to be consistent with Nestorianism. To address the problem, Leo asked the emperor to order that a careful and exact translation of the letter be made into Greek, either by Julian of Cios or by someone else whom the emperor considered to be capable. He was to send the newly translated *Tome*, impressed with the imperial seal, to the judges of Alexandria, who were to read the text aloud in the churches. Those who heard it were to recognize immediately that its view of the Incarnation was consistent with that of the Alexandrian theologians whom they so admired.

From this flurry of activity in Egypt it seems that Leo entrusted the emperor with assignments, such as promoting catholic doctrine, that were perhaps better suited to the skills of a bishop.[22] By this time, Leo's

[20] Leo, *Ep.* 130.1–2; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Marcianum imp.* (d. 10 m. Mart. a. 454) ACO II, 4, pp. 83–84. While Leo praises Proterius profusely, he writes to the emperor that Proterius will be even more steadfast with exhortations from him.

[21] Ibid. 130.3. Leo said he would not force his *Tome* on the people of Alexandria, but would simply make it available to them in a new, accurate translation. He wanted them to see that it was consistent with the teaching of their bishops.

[22] Note, for instance, that Marcian was involved in removing problematic monks from their monasteries. See Leo, *Ep.* 142.2; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Marcianum imp.* (d. 13 m. Mart. a. 455) ACO II, 4, p. 95.

relationship with Anatolius, the bishop of Constantinople who was the most likely candidate to undertake such tasks, had faltered because of the controversy over canon 28.[23] Marcian, concerned about the problems between them, wrote to Leo, urging him to restore communications with the bishop.[24] Although Leo genuinely approved of the work that Marcian had done to promote Chalcedon, he, nonetheless, hesitated to comply with this demand regarding Anatolius. Only if the bishop made clear his intent to imitate Marcian's zeal for the Chalcedonian faith and to abide by the canons would Leo embrace him.[25] His indebtedness to the emperor was such that one month later (May 454) he reluctantly restored his relationship with Anatolius, even while he remained critical of the bishop. Anatolius was responsible for the rift between them, said Leo, because he had refused to respond to Leo's letters and because he had failed to inform him that he had removed the archdeacon Aetius from office in order to install a Eutychian named Andrew.[26] In agreeing to reconcile with the bishop in spite of such shortcomings, Leo was saying that he valued his relationship with the emperor and delighted in complying with his wishes.[27] He did not sincerely believe that Anatolius had repented.

For the last two years of Marcian's reign no correspondence between him and Leo survives. Marcian died in January 457 without having secured the imperial succession. Soon thereafter, Leo I, a military tribune and a native of Dacia in Illyricum, was proclaimed emperor with the support of the Alan soldier, Aspar.[28] This change in imperial power must have been unsettling to Leo because Marcian had been so eager to promote his interests. Although Leo I was sympathetic to Rome, he could not have matched his predecessor's devotion to furthering the Chalcedonian cause. As circumstances would have it, the

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[23] Leo acknowledges as much in *Ep.* 136; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Marcianum imp.* (d. 29 m. Maii a. 454) ACO II, 4, pp. 90–91.

[24] Leo refers to such a letter, which has since been lost, in his *Ep.* 128; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Marcianum imp.* (d. 9 m. Mart. a. 454) ACO II, 4, p. 86.

[25] Leo, Ep. 134.1; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Marcianum imp.* (d. 15 m. Apr. a. 454) ACO II, 4, pp. 87–88; *Ep.* 128; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Marcianum imp.* (d. 9 m. Mart. a. 454) ACO II, 4, p. 86.

[26] Leo, *Ep.* 128; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Marcianum imp.* (d. 9 m. Mart. a. 454) ACO II, 4, p. 86.

[27] Leo, *Ep.* 136.1; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Marcianum imp.* (d. 29 m. Maii a. 454) ACO II, 4, pp. 90–91.

[28] Candidus, in Blockley, *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians of the Later Roman Empire*, p. 465.

depth of the new emperor's commitment was to be tested immediately, for he had come to power during a critical juncture in the status of the churches: the pro-Chalcedonian bishop of Alexandria, Proterius, had been murdered by the anti-Chalcedonians in Alexandria shortly after the death of Marcian, who saw in the emperor's demise an opportunity to overturn the council.[29] This sudden outbreak of violence highlighted the fact that Proterius, a nominal Chalcedonian in his own right, had been installed as bishop through the agency of the imperial court and against the wishes of the clergy and people. Chalcedonianism in Egypt was hanging by the thread of its imperial church. To restore the illusion that Chalcedon continued to govern the mostly single-nature churches of Alexandria, the new emperor had to promote the council unequivocally. His first action was, at Leo's urging (11 July 457), to stop the violent attacks committed by the anti-Chalcedonians.[30] Because it was well-suited to the capabilities of the imperial office, quelling civil unrest would "have an outcome pleasing to God if [the emperor did] not allow the decisions made at the holy Chalcedonian synod concerning the Incarnation of Christ the Lord to be overturned by any reconsideration."[31] The fear was that the emperor's commitment to Chalcedon might falter as a result of the violence committed by its opponents. Leo had reason to be anxious. Within a few months of coming to power, Leo I asked him to attend a new council. Predictably, he refused to comply, because such a council would have undermined the doctrinal and disciplinary decrees already established at Chalcedon and would have served the interests of the anti-Chalcedonians.

This variety of imperial intervention into ecclesiastical affairs must have reminded Leo of what had taken place at the Robber Synod, where Dioscorus and the Alexandrian see, under the auspices of the imperial court, had succeeded in imposing their christological views, through violence and intimidation, upon the eastern churches.[32] Timothy Aelurus, who was among the anti-Chalcedonians responsible for murdering Proterius, was now the illegitimate bishop of the Alexan-

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[29] See Evagrius, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, 2.8–10.

[30] Leo, *Ep.* 145.1; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Leonem imp.* (d. 11 m. Iul. a. 457) ACO II, 4, pp. 95–96.

[31] Leo, *Ep.* 145.1; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Leonem imp.* (d. 11 m. Iul. a. 457) ACO II, 4, pp. 95–96. Acknowledging that the emperor had already successfully intervened against heretics on behalf of the council, Leo asked him to grant that nothing disturb the definitions and decrees promulgated there.

[32] See Jalland, p. 383.

drian see.[33] Leo wanted to prevent Timothy and his supporters from receiving imperial backing for their plan to convene a new council that might confirm their christological views, as Dioscorus and his supporters had succeeded in doing less than ten years before. Timothy, like Dioscorus, subscribed to a Nicene fundamentalism that rejected the two-nature christology as an unnecessary and intolerable innovation to the well-settled creed. And by this strategy, Timothy, like Dioscorus, was poised to win the emperor's support. To prevent that from happening, Leo urged the emperor to depose Timothy—a murderer, a heretic, and a usurper to the Alexandrian see—and to install in his place a bishop sympathetic to Chalcedon.[34]

The reality was certainly much more complex and nuanced than Leo implied, as factionalism soon shattered any hopes he had of achieving even the illusion of effortless unanimity. The emperor had received two petitions, one from the anti-Chalcedonians of Alexandria, the other from the catholic bishops and clergy, in which both parties asked him to redress their list of grievances. Because the emperor did not know which of the two petitions should be granted, Leo offered several principles in support of the catholic petition. First, the truth is declared openly for everyone to see: The petition filed by the catholics bore signatures by which twenty bishops and clergy publicly declared their commitment to Chalcedon, while that of their opponents remained unsigned. Second, heretics resort to violence in order to undermine ecclesiastical order: "The one document contains [ ] the petition of catholics, the other lays bare the fictions of heretics [ ]; the former laments the overthrow of the Lord's priests, of the entire Christian people, and of the monasteries; while a series of savage crimes is displayed in the latter."[35] Third, heretics are implicitly more perilous than enemies of the state: An emperor who is praised for having conquered the armies of enemy nations, said Leo, will be praised that much more for liberating the church of Alexandria from its tyrant, Timothy. Finally, truth, in this case, is a democratic principle: insofar as Leo was concerned, the majority of bishops and priests, including the catholic bishops expelled from Alexandria, subscribed to Chalcedon: "Notice that

[33] On the Alexandrian-Greek christology of Timothy Aelurus, see A. Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition. The Church of Alexandria with Nubia and Ethiopia afer 451* (Louisville, KY, 1996), vol. 2, pp. 7–35.

[34] Leo, *Ep.* 156.3, 1 December 457, *Litteras clementiae tuae*, Jaffé 532.

[35] Leo, *Ep.* 156.4, 1 December 457, Jaffé 532.

all the Lord's priests that are in the world are beseeching you on behalf of the faith, in which is redemption for the whole world."[36] Contrary to the picture of ecclesiastical unity that Leo presented, this petition disclosed that factionalism and divisiveness was not confined to the church of Alexandria. Non-Chalcedonians had also been discovered recently in Constantinople. As he had asked Marcian, so Leo urged the current emperor to intervene in the ecclesiastical politics of the imperial city in order to remove its non-Chalcedonians, with or without the help of its bishop Anatolius. It was clear that Leo desperately needed, and cleverly sought, the help of the emperor in protecting the decisions of the council.

To win that support, Leo made at least one concession. Although he was adamant that the matter not be discussed and that no new council be held, he, nonetheless, agreed to send papal legates to the emperor in order to represent him.[37] The conversation that Leo envisioned, however, promised to be limited in scope and one-sided. His legates, Domitian and Geminian, were dispatched to Constantinople on the diplomatic mission in order to *represent* the interests of Rome, having been duly warned not to *defend* those interests in an open debate. What "representing those interests" entailed was simply clarifying for the emperor the apostolic rule of faith and the content of the gospel, both of which were presumed to confirm Nicaea and Chalcedon.[38] The fear was that the emperor might misconstrue such a mission as an invitation for debate, in which the papal legates might be asked to discuss their christological views with Eutychians. To prevent that from happening, Leo urged the emperor simply to listen to the suggestions offered by the legates, who were forbidden from revisiting what Chalcedon had already settled.

Leo's plan was temporarily successful. By June 460, a Chalcedonian bishop named Timothy (II) Solophaciolus had been installed in the see of Alexandria. Not merely a nominal Chalcedonian, he was among the

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[36] Ibid. 156.3.

[37] Leo, *Ep.* 162.3; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Anatolium CPolitanum* (d. 28 m. Mart. a. 458) ACO II, 4, p. xliv.

[38] Leo, *Epp.* 162.3, 164.1; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Leonem imp.* (d. 21 m. Mart. a. 458) ACO II, 4, pp. 105–107; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Leonem imp.* (d. 17 m. Aug. a. 458) ACO II, 4, pp. 110–112. See also Leo's dogmatic letter, *Ep.* 165, in which he explained to the emperor Chalcedonian christology to an extent that betrays his concern for the emperor's orthodoxy. *Epistula Leonis papae ad Leonem imp.* (d. 17 m. Aug. a. 458) ACO II, 4, pp. 113–131.

Egyptian refugees who had come to Constantinople and petitioned the emperor to remove the anti-Chalcedonian, Timothy Aelurus.[39] Given this favorable turn of events so far as Leo was concerned, the emperor was asked to pass decrees confirming the new Chalcedonian bishop and to ensure that the ousted-bishop Timothy was never to return to the Alexandrian see.

2. *The apocrisiarius in Constantinople*

Unlike the eastern bishops and emperors, whose interests were not always congruous with those of Rome, Leo's most loyal correspondent was his papal legate, the *apocrisiarius* Julian of Cios, who subscribed to virtually the same views as the apostolic see. As the papal representative residing in Constantinople, Julian was expected to act as Leo's eyes and ears, reporting to him everything that pertained to the churches.[40] Their relationship was defined by the fact that some portion of Leo himself was thought to reside in the person of Julian.[41] That such a close connection existed between them did not imply that he had free reign to impose his views upon the internal affairs of the eastern churches, or that he had the authority to resolve all cases. He was discouraged from intervening in ecclesiastical inquiries that ought to be decided by the local bishops and from resolving difficult cases without consulting Leo first.[42] The general prohibition against involving himself too closely in their ecclesiastical affairs did not mean that he was to remain entirely aloof from local interests. He was rather to safeguard those interests in much the same way he was to safeguard Rome's. That was because Leo thought that the interests of Rome and Constantinople generally coincided, in that the see of Constantinople benefited, as Leo saw it, just as much as Rome did when its bishops, clergy, and laity preserved the canons and subscribed to doctrines consistent with those upheld by

[39] Leo, *Ep.* 169.1; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Leonem imp.* (d. 17 m. Iun. a. 460), O. Guenther, *CSEL* 35, 1, pp. 117–118.

[40] Leo, *Ep.* 125; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Iulianum episc. Coi* (d. 25 m. Iun. a. 453) ACO II, 4, p. 78.

[41] Ibid. Leo, *Ep.* 113.2; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Iulianum episc. Coi* (d. 11 m. Mart. a. 453) ACO II, 4, pp. 64–65 (Leo is confused as to whether the monks are rioting because they support Eutyches, or because they are upset that their bishop does. Ibid. 113.3).

[42] Ibid. 113.2.

the apostolic see. Not only Leo's concept of papal representation, by which the person of the pope was present in his legate, but also his ideology of Christian unity, therefore, shaped the sphere of action that was permitted to Julian.

When it served Leo's interests, Julian was asked to intervene in the internal affairs of the church of Constantinople. Anatolius had recently removed from office the archdeacon Aetius, a Chalcedonian, and replaced him with Andrew, who was known to have associated with Eutychians.[43] There were also rumors that those who had condemned Flavian were being shown respect in Constantinople, while his supporters were being reviled. Julian was to join the emperor in chastening Anatolius for permitting this to happen. Of the letters that Leo wrote to the emperor, to Anatolius, and to Julian, it is perhaps not surprising that his letter to Julian was by far the most forthright. From it we learn that Anatolius had removed the archdeacon not simply because he, Anatolius, intended to support the anti-Chalcedonians in the city, as Leo generally suggested, but because the archdeacon had an irritating personality.[44] Acknowledging this personality conflict to his confidante Julian, Leo criticized Anatolius, nonetheless, for having replaced his archdeacon with a man whose christological views were objectionable. Under pressure from Julian and the emperor, Anatolius eventually restored Aetius to office.[45] The episode illustrates how doctrinal controversy could be used deliberately and strategically to obscure what had been at its core a personal matter.

Sometimes Julian's experiences in Constantinople made him sympathize with those, such as Anatolius, whom Leo viewed mainly with suspicion. When Anatolius asked Leo to ratify canon 28, Julian evidently perceived that Leo's failure to endorse Chalcedon was not only stirring trouble between Rome and Constantinople, but fueling the anti-Chalcedonian cause as well, whose supporters found in the current strife between the sees an opportunity to overturn the council.[46] Annoyed by Julian's appeal to ratify Chalcedon, Leo thought that granting such a request might undermine the authority of Rome, for the reasons already suggested.

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[43] Ibid. 113.1.

[44] Ibid. 113.2.

[45] Leo, *Ep.* 132.2, 29 May 454, *Omne quidem solatium.*

[46] Leo, *Ep.* 107; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Iulianum episc. Coi* (d. 22 m. Maii a. 452) ACO II, 4, p. 62.

This disagreement between Leo and Julian was the result of their different underlying purposes. Julian, to maintain the semblance of unity between the two ecclesiastical sees, wanted Leo to succumb to the political pressures that were mounting in Constantinople—of which Julian must have been acutely aware—by publicly endorsing the canon. Leo, determined to preserve his hierarchical view of the relationship among the patriarchates, persisted in his belief that Anatolius, by promoting canon 28, had violated the canons of Nicaea. Julian could not make Leo compromise his deeply held principles in order to accommodate the political realities in Constantinople. For attempting to do so, he was criticized sharply. Although Julian alone did not succeed in persuading him, Leo let his *apocrisiarius* know that the authority of the *emperor* moved him subtly to shift his views. "What [ ] our most clement emperor deemed necessary I willingly complied with by sending letters to all the brethren who were present at the Chalcedonian synod in order to show that I approved of what our holy brethren upheld concerning the rule of faith."[47] This was one instance in which the efforts of his *apocrisiarius* were not necessarily appreciated.

In most cases, though, Julian served as Leo's trusted confidante, who was privy to information that Leo had deliberately concealed from others. Sometimes he was asked to use that privileged information to influence the emperor. In one of Leo's letters to Julian we learn that Marcian had discretely imposed upon Leo the task of admonishing Eudocia, the widow of Theodosius, for having instigated the monks in Palestine to rebellion.[48] Leo thereupon persuaded Valentinian III to send her a letter asking her to threaten the leaders of the sedition with punishment by the imperial authorities if they refused to stop rioting. It was Julian's task to persuade Marcian to do the same. When Dioscorus died and the Chalcedonian Proterius was elected as his successor, Leo was concerned that rebellions might also occur in Alexandria.[49] Julian was to use the imperial munificence wisely by suggesting to Marcian how best to manage that city's ecclesiastical affairs.[50] Imperial policy may indeed have been influenced by Julian's intervention. It seems that

[47] Leo, *Ep.* 117.1; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Iulianum episc. Coi* (d. 21 m. Mart. a. 453) ACO II, 4, pp. 69–70.

[48] Ibid. 117.3.

[49] Leo, *Ep.* 140; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Iulianum episc. Coi* (d. 6 m. Dec. a. 454) ACO II, 4, pp. 93–94.

[50] Ibid; Leo, *Ep.* 118.2; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Iulianum episc. Coi* (d. 2. m. Apr. a. 453) ACO II, 4, pp. 71–72.

three months later, John, a *spectabilis vir*, was sent to Egypt, probably to ensure that the new Chalcedonian bishop was successfully installed in the Alexandrian see. Julian was to provide Leo with a full report when John returned to Constantinople.[51]

Sometimes Julian was expected merely to implement a strategy that had already been conceived of in Rome. When the monks were rioting in Palestine, for instance, Leo shared with Julian his plan to ask the emperor to suppress the riots by removing from their monasteries and sending into exile those who had instigated the uprisings.[52] Leo intended to persuade the monks to subscribe to orthodoxy by sending a copy of Athanasius' letter to Epictetus, which, he thought, contained all the teachings on the Incarnation needed to defeat Eutychianism and Nestorianism. As Leo remarked to Julian, "Let the followers of Eutyches and Dioscorus, who claim that our teaching departs from the doctrine and thinking of the fathers, dare to accuse this man of such great authority [i.e., Athanasius] of either ignorance or depravity."[53] He did not consult with Julian in devising this strategy, in part, because he did not need to. Julian must have understood that it was in the interests of Rome to remove the anti-Chalcedonian monks from their monasteries and to reeducate them in the principles of orthodoxy.

Other matters, though, Leo left mainly to the discretion of his legate. Julian, for instance, was expected to resolve the problem instigated by Thalassius, the Metropolitan of Caesarea, a known follower of Eutyches who, in violation of the canons, had permitted a certain monk named George to preach.[54] Distinguishing between the jurisdiction of the imperial and the sacerdotal powers, Leo decided that this matter, unlike that of the rioting monks, fell within the prerogative of the *sacerdotium*, giving Julian, rather than the emperor, the authority to administer the punishment. When Leo detected a discrepancy between the calculations that Rome and Alexandria had made to determine the date for Easter (455), Julian was asked to settle the matter by work-

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[51] Leo, *Ep.* 141.1; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Iulianum episc. Coi* (d. 11 m. Maii a. 455) ACO II, 4, pp. 94–95. *Spectabilis vir*, second order of the senate, perhaps a post in the civil administration. See Jalland, p. 374.

[52] Leo, *Ep.* 109.2; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Iulianum episc. Coi* (d. 25 m. Nou. a. 452) ACO II, 4, pp. 137–138.

[53] Ibid. 109.3.

[54] Leo, *Ep.* 118.2; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Iulianum episc. Coi* (d. 2 m. Apr. a. 453) ACO II, 4, pp. 71–72.

ing with the emperor.[55] Likewise, when falsified translations of the *Tome* made Leo sound like a Nestorian, Julian was responsible for producing an accurate translation into Greek and for sending it to the emperor, whose imperial seal was to mark it as authentic.[56] In the delicate matter of Leo's approval of Chalcedon, Julian was provided with two sets of documents, in each of which Leo had ratified the council: the one set included only his letter of 21 March 453 addressed to the Council of Chalcedon;[57] the other appended to it his letter of 22 May 452 addressed to Anatolius.[58] In the letter to the council (453), Leo stated his agreement with its doctrinal and ecclesiastical definitions, but revealed his discontent with Anatolius, whom he called 'ambitious' for having championed canon 28. In his letter to Anatolius (452), Leo not only chastised the bishop, but impugned the entire council as well for having misused the synodal proceedings to deliberate over matters that were, from Rome's point of view, beyond the jurisdiction of the council. In this same letter he also dismissed the canon passed "sixty (sic) years earlier by the Council of Constantinople," the precursor to canon 28 that ascribed to the see of Constantinople second place after Rome. Leo entrusted Julian with the task of deciding which set of documents to present to the emperor.[59] That he did so indicates how much confidence he had in his *apocrisiarius* and how astute a politician he really was. He knew that Julian, steeped in the everyday politics of the imperial city, was better situated than he to judge the emperor's reaction. And he was well attuned to the effect that ill-chosen words might have on the relationship between Rome and the imperial court. No record survives of which of the two options Julian selected, although later he informed Leo that his letter to the council was read aloud only to the point where he confirmed its proceedings, thereby omitting the part where he sharply disapproved of Anatolius and canon 28.[60] Even the

[55] Leo, *Ep.* 127.2; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Iulianum episc. Coi* (d. 9 m. Ian. a. 454) ACO II, 4, pp. 82–83; *Ep.* 131.2; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Iulianum episc. Coi* (d. 10 m. Mart. a. 454) ACO II, 4, p. 87.

[56] Ibid. 131.1.

[57] Leo, *Ep.* 114; *Epistula Leonis papae ad concilium Chalcedonense* (d. 21 m. Mart. a. 453) ACO II, 4, pp. 70–71.

[58] Leo, *Ep.* 106; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Anatolium CPolitanum* (d. 22 m. Maii a. 452) ACO II, 4, pp. 59–62.

[59] Leo, *Ep.* 117.5; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Iulianum episc. Coi* (d. 21 m. Mart. a. 453) ACO II, 4, pp. 69–70.

[60] Leo, *Ep.* 127.3; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Iulianum episc. Coi* (d. 9 m. Ian. a. 454) ACO II, 4, pp. 82–83.

Eastern bishops were, it seems, committed to presenting Leo's endorsement in the best possible light.

To avert a crisis, Julian sometimes, on his own initiative, intervened directly in ecclesiastical affairs. After the death of Marcian in January 457 (and the subsequent murder of Proterius by anti-Chalcedonians who rose to power under Timothy Aerulus), Leo acknowledged that Julian was successful in putting down the rebellion of the Eutychians in Constantinople.[61] How he accomplished it we do not know, for even Leo complained that Julian had failed to write during this tumultuous period.[62] To compensate for the breakdown in communication with his *apocrisiarius*, Leo initiated correspondence with Aetius the priest, the same man who had been restored to the office of archdeacon and promoted to the office of priest after Anatolius had replaced him with Andrew, a follower of Eutyches.[63] He, in addition to the silent Julian, was now responsible for facilitating Leo's plan to win support for Chalcedon. Together they were to deliver letters that Leo had addressed to certain clergy and bishops, by which he hoped to forge a consensus among them.[64] If the eastern bishops demonstrated to the emperor that they upheld the definitions and decrees of the council, Leo thought that the Chalcedonians would receive even greater imperial support for their cause.[65] To that end, additional demands were made upon Julian: he was to offer further suggestions to the emperor to prevent Chalcedon from being overturned; he was to ask that the state of the Alexandrian church be repealed by appointing a Chalcedonian bishop to replace Proterius.[66] Unsure whether Julian would reply, Leo continued to correspond with Aetius, who was to write his own letters to the bishops of Antioch and Jerusalem, urging them to uphold the council.

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[61] Leo, *Ep.* 144; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Iulianum episc. Coi* (d. 1 m. Iun. a. 457) ACO II, 4, p. 138. When Leo wrote this letter he was still unaware that Proterius had been murdered on 28 March 457.

[62] Leo, *Ep.* 147.1; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Iulianum episc. Coi* (d. 11 m. Iul. a. 457) ACO II, 4, p. 97.

[63] For the first indication that Leo decided to establish a working relationship with Aetius, see Leo, *Ep.* 152; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Iulianum episc. Coi* (d. 1 m. Sept. a. 457) ACO II, 4, p. 99.

[64] i.e., *Epp.* 149–150; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Basilium Antiochenum* (d. 1 m. Sept. a. 457) ACO II, 4, pp. 97–98; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Euxitheum Thessalonicensem* (d. 1 m. Sept. a. 457) ACO II, 4, p. 98.

[65] Leo, *Ep.* 152; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Iulianum episc. Coi* (d. 1 m. Sept. a. 457) ACO II, 4, p. 99.

[66] Leo, *Ep.* 147.2; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Iulianum episc. Coi* (d. 11 m. Iul. a. 457) ACO II, 4, p. 97.

Like the letters that had been sent earlier from Rome, these new letters composed by Aetius were similarly meant to consolidate agreement among the bishops, by which Leo planned to convince the emperor that the decisions of Chalcedon had received widespread acceptance.[67]

3. *A renewed correspondence with Anatolius*

Throughout much of the controversy that was taking place in Alexandria, Leo did not write to Anatolius. It was only after Marcian died in January 457 that he resumed correspondence with the bishop. He probably feared that the new emperor, Leo I, would be less committed than Marcian had been to protecting the council and that he might need the bishop's assistance. Anatolius was more optimistic. In a letter no longer extant by which he informed Leo of the anti-Chalcedonian uprisings taking place in Alexandria, he praised the new emperor for his orthodoxy and for removing anti-Chalcedonians from the church. In spite of such measures, Leo thought that the emperor needed Anatolius' urging in order to support the Chalcedonian cause.[68] He was just as ambivalent in the encyclical letter he addressed to the sees of Antioch, Jerusalem, Thessaloniki, Corinth, and Dyrrhachium two months later, in which he assured the bishops (using rhetoric that revealed just how concerned he really was) that he held the new emperor in the same esteem as Marcian: horrified by the murder of Proterius, Leo I had prevented the anti-Chalcedonians from committing further crimes.[69] That nod to civil order may have sufficed to rally the bishops, but it was not enough to persuade Leo that the emperor truly understood how important it was to defend Chalcedon, and how much was at stake in preventing its detractors from orchestrating a new council. To convince Leo I to deny the petition filed by the anti-Chalcedonians, the eastern bishops were to express their unwavering commitment to Chalcedon.

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[67] Leo, *Ep.* 153; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Aetium presbyterum* (d. 1 m. Sept. a. 457) ACO II, 4, pp. 99–100.

[68] Leo, *Ep.* 146.2; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Anatolium CPolitanum* (d. 11 m. Iul. 457) ACO II, 4, pp. 96–97. Having asked Anatolius to do the same, Leo urged the bishop to keep him well informed of the state of affairs in Alexandria, probably fearing that the anti-Chalcedonians planned further violence.

[69] *Codex Encyclius*, 1 September 457, ACO II, 5, pp. 9–98; *Epp.* 149–150; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Basilium Antiochenum* (d. 1 m. Sept. a. 457) ACO II, 4, pp. 97–98; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Euxitheum Thessalonicensem* (d. 1 m. Sept. a. 457) ACO II, 4, p. 98.

After the death of Marcian, they were the ones whom Leo relied upon to preserve its definitions and decrees.

Leo was also concerned about rumors he had heard that certain non-Chalcedonians continued to preach their unorthodox views in the churches of Constantinople. To ferret out the truth, Anatolius was asked to examine in secret a presbyter named Atticus, who was reported to have promoted Eutychianism in several public disputations in the churches.[70] If Anatolius, together with the examiners, determined that Atticus was guilty of the charge of heresy, then Anatolius was either to restore him to catholic orthodoxy or expel him from the church. In making that request, Leo tacitly acknowledged that Anatolius was in communion once again with the apostolic see, and that his efforts were needed in order to further its interests. Although Leo had previously dismissed him, Anatolius was now permitted to function as the leader of his see, who was capable of deciding, with minimal guidance from Rome, who should remain within the church and who should be excluded. Anatolius was similarly commended for having reported that Timothy, the newly installed bishop of Alexandria, was in part responsible for the murder of Proterius, the former bishop of that see.[71] Having earned Leo's tentative approval, he was asked i) to console the Chalcedonian clergy who had been expelled from Egypt and who were living in exile in Constantinople[72] and ii) to intervene in imperial policy by ensuring that Leo I did not grant the petition for a new council filed by the four anti-Chalcedonian bishops who, along with Timothy, had murdered Proterius.[73] Uncertain whether Anatolius would succeed in convincing the emperor to support the Chalcedonian cause, Leo wrote to the Egyptian bishops living in exile in Constantinople. They were to ask the emperor to arrange for their return and to expel from Alexandria those responsible for the assassination.[74]

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[70] Leo, *Ep.* 151; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Anatolium CPolitanum* (d. 1 m. Sept. a. 457) ACO II, 4, pp. 138–139.

[71] Leo, *Ep.* 155.1; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Anatolium CPolitanum* (d. 11 m. Oct. a. 457) ACO II, 4, pp. 100–101.

[72] See Leo, *Ep.* 154; *Epistula Leonis papae ad episcopos ex Aegypto apud CPolim constitutos* (d. 11 m. Oct. a. 457). *Ep.* 157.3; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Anatolium CPolitanum*. ACO II, 4, pp. 109–110. They also received encouragement from Leo, who urged them to endure their trials.

[73] Ibid. 157.2.

[74] Leo, *Ep.* 158; *Epistula Leonis papae ad episcopos Aegyptios apud CPolim constitutos* (d. 1 m. Dec. a. 457) ACO II, 4, pp. 104–105.

Unfortunately for Anatolius, he did not continue to meet these expectations. Leo was furious that he had neglected to expel the Eutychians from Constantinople, as he had been asked to do. And he was furious that Anatolius had failed to stop Atticus, the anti-Chalcedonian presbyter, from speaking against Chalcedon in the churches. Should he continue to disregard these orders, said Leo, then he, along with Atticus, would be implicated in the Eutychian heresy.[75] Distressed, Anatolius did not acquiesce in Leo's demands, but instead told Atticus to send a doctrinal confession to Rome, proving his orthodoxy.[76] Leo was unmoved by the gesture. The confession that he received, said Leo, merely revealed that Atticus subscribed to the beliefs of Eutyches, the same beliefs that he was to anathematize and condemn if he wished to remain in the church.[77] To consider the reasons for Anatolius' disobedience is to understand something about the way each party viewed the relationship between the two patriarchal sees. Judging Atticus' orthodoxy was, as Anatolius saw it, a job better left to Rome. That is why he preferred to extract a confession of faith and send it to Leo than to conduct a formal inquiry whose outcome might later be disputed. Leo assured him that his worries were unfounded. The task of judging orthodoxy was, he said, appropriate to the bishop of Constantinople, and agreeing to complete it would only elevate his status with respect to Rome. The church of Constantinople was to function as a semiautonomous satellite of the apostolic see.

It was in that capacity that Anatolius somehow persuaded the emperor not to convene a new council, but rather to shift the burden of decision-making onto the bishops themselves.[78] Having been informed, through an encyclical letter sent to Anatolius and the Metropolitans, of the murder committed in Alexandria, they were asked by the emperor to hold local synods in order to answer two questions: (i) should Timothy Aelurus be recognized as the bishop of Alexandria? and (ii) do the bishops subscribe to the Council of Chalcedon?[79] Attached to the

[75] Leo, *Ep.* 157.4; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Anatolium CPolitanum.* ACO II, 4, pp. 109–110.

[76] Leo, *Ep.* 161.2; *Epistula Leonis papae ad clerum CPolitanum* (d. 21 m. Mart. a. 458) ACO II, 4, pp. 108–109. We know from this letter (which Silva-Tarouca considers doubtful) eliciting the support of the presbyters, deacons, and clergy of Constantinople that Leo did not trust Anatolius to carry out his instructions.

[77] Leo, *Ep.* 163; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Anatolium CPolitanum* (d. 28 m. Mart. a. 458) ACO II, 4, p. xliv.

[78] Evagrius, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, 2.9; see Whitby, *The Ecclesiastical History of Evagrius Scholasticus*, p. 89, n. 112, citing Theodore Lector, *Ecclesiastical History*, 371–372.

[79] See Jalland, p. 392.

encyclical was a copy of the petitions that the Chalcedonians and anti-Chalcedonians had filed with the emperor, the latter of which also informed the Metropolitans that there was local support for Timothy, "whom the populace of the city of the Alexandrians, and the dignitaries, and the councillors, and the ship owners request for themselves as bishop."[80] With both the Chalcedonian and anti-Chalcedonian petitions attached to it, and a full disclosure of Timothy's popularity among the Egyptians, the encyclical letter sent by the emperor was meant to be a nonpartisan account of the controversy. The Metropolitans were to decide for themselves i) whether Chalcedon should be overturned and ii) whether a murderer (i.e., Timothy) should continue to serve as patriarch. The response to the encyclical was nearly unanimous. Only one local synod, held in the province of Pamphylia, decided that Timothy was the legitimate bishop of Alexandria. None of the local synods wanted to overturn Chalcedon.[81] No formal statement was issued that the Council of Chalcedon be upheld, nor were any further requests made to convene a new council.

More work was needed to integrate the church of Alexandria with Chalcedonian orthodoxy. In August 458, Leo sent his legates Domitian and Geminian to assist the emperor in restoring support for the council there.[82] We do not hear from Leo again until June 460 when he wrote letters to the emperor (in which he thanked him for having removed "the evil murderer … from the neck of the Alexandrian church") and to the new bishop of Constantinople, Gennadius.[83] Although Timothy Aelurus had been expelled successfully from Alexandria, he was now living in Constantinople, where he was not to be received in communion with the church, even if he subscribed to catholic doctrine. Gennadius was to make certain that a new bishop, sympathetic to Chalcedon, be installed in the Alexandrian see. What role, if any, Gennadius played in electing the new bishop of Alexandria, the Chalcedonian, Timothy (II) Salophaciolum, is difficult to say. Shortly after the election, Leo stopped writing to Gennadius and corresponded directly with Timo-

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[80] Evagrius, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, 2.9; Whitby, *The Ecclesiastical History of Evagrius Scholasticus*, p. 90.

[81] Jalland, p. 392.

[82] Leo, *Ep.* 164.1; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Leonem imp.* (d. 17 Aug. a. 458) ACO II, 4, pp. 110–112.

[83] Leo, *Ep.* 169.1; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Leonem imp.* (d. 17 m. Iun. a. 460). Guenther, CSEL 35, 1, pp. 117–118; *Ep.* 170; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Gennadium CPolitanum* (d. 17 m. Iun. a. 460) ibid., pp. 119–120.

thy II.[84] Pleased that a Chalcedonian had finally been installed in the Alexandrian see, Leo made him responsible for persuading the anti-Chalcedonians to subscribe to the council and for reporting to Leo any lingering traces he found of the Nestorian or Eutychian heresy. To assist in such measures, Leo wrote to the Egyptian clergy and bishops, who were to cooperate with their new bishop[85] and to use the emperor to restore lasting peace in the city.[86] From Leo's point of view, there was only the slightest hint that the Chalcedonianism that had been imposed upon Egypt was merely a thin veneer.

On the basis of Rome's long history with the Alexandrian see[87] Leo hoped to secure his, and by extension Chalcedon's, continuing presence there. Although it is true that prior to the patriarchate of Timothy II Leo had hardly corresponded with the bishops of Alexandria, he had welcomed them into communion, nonetheless, because of the close ties that had been established between Rome and Alexandria when Athanasius and pope Julius together defeated Arianism. Those ties were renewed when Cyril of Alexandria and pope Caelestine conspired against Nestorius at the Council of Ephesus in 431. The legend that a disciple of Peter, St. Mark of the gospel, was the founder of the Alexandrian see also united the two churches. That is why Leo had not hesitated in asking the former bishops of Alexandria, Dioscorus and Proterius, to observe the practices of the Roman church.[88] Dioscorus was to keep fixed days for ordaining priests and deacons, and he was not to repeat the eucharist during the great festivals. Proterius was to set the date for Easter in conformity with the practice of Rome. It was not until Marcian told him of the discrepancy between Rome and Alexandria in setting the date for Easter in 455 that Proterius' true feelings were revealed in his terse reply to Leo: after having examined the legal books, the institutions of the ancient doctors, and the findings of Theophilus, he concluded that the date had been determined cor-

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[84] Leo, *Ep.* 171; *Epistula Leonis ad Timotheum Salophaciolum* (d. 18 m. Aug. a. 460) ibid., pp. 120–121.

[85] Leo, *Ep.* 173; *Epistula Leonis papae ad episcopos Aegyptios* (d. 18 m. Aug. a. 460) ibid., pp. 123–124.

[86] Leo, *Ep.* 172; *Epistula Leonis ad presbyteros et diacones ecclesiae Alexandrinae* (d. 18 m. Aug. a. 460) ibid., pp. 121–122.

[87] See *Leo*, Ep. 9, 21 June 445, *Quantum dilectioni*, Jaffé 406.

[88] See ibid. Note that in a letter (*Ep.* 129, 10 March 454) to Proterius, Leo wrote that he was to explain to the clergy and people that the *Tome* to Flavian did not depart from the rule of faith, and that in the writings of the Alexandrian fathers, Athanasius, Theophilus, and Cyril, they had the means to condemn the christology of Eutyches.

rectly.[89] A nominal Chalcedonian, Proterius had little interest in what Rome had to say, especially in matters of practice. To challenge the calculations setting the date for Easter was, in his mind, to reject the long-standing practices of the Egyptian church which were well beyond the jurisdiction of Rome. Whether Proterius' Chalcedonian successor, Timothy (II) Salophaciolus, was similarly inclined to disregard the directions that Leo issued is impossible to say because no letters from him survive. That most of Egypt had by this time (460) no interest in the views of the apostolic see and of the imperial church is evident from the fact that only ten Egyptian bishops who were sympathetic to Chalcedon could be found to consecrate Timothy II.[90]

Despite the fact that Egypt was to secede shortly from the Chalcedonian churches, Leo's achievement was to mobilize the bishops and persuade the emperors—through his letters to the imperial court, to his *apocrisiarius* Julian of Cios, and to the eastern bishops—that no new council should be granted the authority to undermine what he hoped would be the universal definitions and decrees of Chalcedon. While Leo's notion of a unified Chalcedonian church was too circumscribed to encompass the theology of the Eastern churches, it was, nonetheless, profoundly reflective of and embedded in his view of Rome as the exclusive guardian of a two-nature christology that brought together salvation and secular history in the person of the God-man Christ. Protecting this vision of orthodoxy was connected with his deeply-held belief that only a Christ who was fully human and fully divine, an ethical and moral exemplar that was accessible to human beings, could have refashioned Rome, and by extension the empire that bore its name, into the Christian world that Leo envisioned.

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[89] Leo, *Ep.* 133.1, 454, *Piissimus et fidelissimus imperator noster Marcianus*.

[90] Jalland, p. 397. In a letter considered spurious, Leo supposedly acknowledged to Theodoret that Palestine and Illyricum had objected to parts of his *Tome*. After having reconsidered for five days, they allegedly agreed to subscribe to its teaching. See Leo, *Ep.* 120; *Epistula Leonis papae ad Theodoretum episc. Cyri* (d. 11 m. Iun. a. 453) ACO II, 4, pp. 78–81.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE 'CITY OF GOD' UNFOLDS IN HISTORY

Although the post-Chalcedon world witnessed the secession of the non-Chalcedonian churches, the ideology of Christian unity persisted, Leo having championed it through his correspondence with the western and eastern imperial courts and churches and through the sermons he delivered. It would be no exaggeration to say that his abiding conception of a unified church survived the physical reality of its separation.

The threat to Roman identity and state security posed by his recent experiences with Attila the Hun and the Vandal King Geiseric did not overshadow the problem of post-Chalcedon unity, but brought it into sharper focus. From these encounters with barbarians Leo understood that the ideology of unity, along with the virtues of Christian *romanitas* that it implied, would have to survive not only the secession of so many eastern churches, but also the political demise of the western empire. Amid a pervasive sense of chaos, borne of civil disorder and emotional anxiety, the barbarian problem was addressed through the lens of this ideology. His solution did not postpone the 'city of God' to the endtime, as Augustine had proposed, but transformed the secular Roman world of Romulus and Remus into the Christian world ushered in by Peter and Paul.[1] That transformation was meant to imbue his ideology of Christian unity with moral content.

There was the overwhelming sense in which the model of the world to which the Augustinian view responded, and that Leo and the West inherited, needed to be revised in the light of the more recent and continuing threat posed by Attila the Hun, the Vandals, and the continuing barbarian aggression. Because the old solution (which I shall consider in the following section) was viewed as only a provisional

[1] According to Roman mythology, Romulus and Remus were the twin founders of Rome. On the crimes of Romulus, see P. Bruggisser, "City of the outcast and the city of the elect: the Romulean asylum in Augustine's 'City of God'," *Augustinian Studies* 30 (1999), pp. 75–76. Against the philanthropic interpretation of Romulus found in pagan scholarship, Augustine defended the more negative view of Romulus that was to prevail among Christians. The asylum of Romulus was seen by Augustine as merely a preliminary phase in the emergence of the heavenly city. Ibid., pp. 100–101.

answer to a more distant threat, many thought that it did not satisfactorily address the renewed barbarian presence. The possibility of political chaos invited Leo, and those who thought like him, to develop an ideology that had the capacity to survive what might seem paradoxically to herald its inevitable demise.[2] The idea of unity outlived the reality of separation because Leo understood that transforming the secular world into a Christian 'city' infused the suffering caused by the imperfection of human justice and the cruelty of the barbarian invasions with moral and ethical meaning. His confidence that this world was governed by human relationships that were divinely guided, that the imperfection of human justice could be transformed through the principles of mercy and compassion, and that the experience of suffering should be viewed in the light of Jesus' suffering on the Cross sustained his idea of Christian unity. It gave, as Markus has observed more generally, "moral and religious content to the ideology of Rome's Christian renewal."[3]

1. *Christian intellectuals respond to the sack of Rome in 410*

To understand what precisely Leo was reacting to, it is useful to examine the model of the world that he inherited. After contemporary pagans attributed the sack of Rome by Alaric in 410 to the decline of the traditional pagan rites, late Roman Christian intellectuals were concerned to separate the fate of the church from the political destiny of Rome.[4]

Prior to that time, such church historians as the fourth-century Greek ecclesiastical historian Eusebius (d. 339) and his Latin translator Rufinus (d. 410) were confident in their view that the empire and church were destined to follow an intertwined path to terrestrial and

[2] i.e., because the idea of unity was conceived of in such a way that it might outlive the fact of separation.

[3] Markus, *The End of Ancient Christianity*, p. 126. See ibid., pp. 126–128.

[4] See generally R.P.C. Hanson, "The Reaction of the Church to the Collapse of the Western Roman Empire in the Fifth Century," *VC* 26 (1972), pp. 272–287. See also C. Lepelley, "Saint Léon le Grand et la cité Romaine," *RevSR* 35 (1961), pp. 130–150; G.F. Chesnut, "Eusebius, Augustine, Orosius, and the Later Patristic and Medieval Christian Historians," in eds. H.W. Attridge, G. Hata, *Eusebius, Christianity, and Judaism* (Leiden, 1992), p. 695. For Augustine, however, *De civitate Dei* also described the relationship of the earthly society to the heavenly kingdom. J.A. Maxfield, "Divine Providence, History, and Progress in Saint Augustine's City of God," *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 66 (2002), pp. 339–360, esp. p. 358.

heavenly greatness.[5] The complete expression of that collaboration was thought to reside in the reign of the emperor Constantine (emperor, 306–337), whom Eusebius construed as the earthly counterpart of the divine Logos of God, Christ: just as the Logos "drives far away from his flock, like savage beasts, those apostate spirits which once flew through the airy tracts above this earth, and fastened on the souls of men, so this his friend [i.e. Constantine], *graced by his heavenly favor with victory over all his foes*, subdues and chastens the open adversaries of the truth in accordance with the usages of war (emph. suppl.)."[6] Steeped in the hierarchically differentiated cosmology of middle-Platonism, Eusebius believed that the imperial authority of the terrestrial realm was the shadowy counterpart of the Trinitarian relationships of the heavenly kingdom. Because of this ontological connection, Constantine was expected to govern his empire according to the pattern of monarchical rule established by the divine sovereignty,[7] by which he might not only passively benefit from, but actively invite, the divine grace flowing freely and felicitously into his reign. There were no historical events or impending disasters to challenge Eusebius' view that the monarchical form of government under a Christian emperor would forever link the terrestrial and celestial realms, as they were meant to be linked, according to the pattern and archetype implied by the heavenly kingdom. His motto, "one God, one law, and one sovereign emperor," implied that the correspondence between the imperial authority and the celestial realm was providentially guided.

With the ongoing barbarian invasions, the Western intellectuals of the fifth century, Christian and pagan alike, were suddenly faced with the prospect that this old paradigm for interpreting the relationship between Christianity and empire was no longer satisfying and that the Roman world, as they knew it, would never be the same.[8] Given the

[5] On Rufinus' translation of Eusebius' *Historia Ecclesiastica* as a work of edification designed to have a therapeutic effect on its listeners, see H. Inglebert, *Les Romains chrétiens face à l'histoire de Rome: histoire, christianisme et romanités en Occident dans l'Antiquité tardive (IIIe–Ve siècles)*, *Collection des études augustiniennes* 145 (Paris, 1996), p. 345. The translation of Rufinus in 405 was important because it popularized in the West the Eusebian theory of the Christian Roman empire as the end of history, it insisted on the faith of the emperors as well as the alliance between church and state, and it omitted all eschatological consideration, according to ibid., p. 349.

[6] Eusebius, *De laudibus Constantini*, c. 2.1–2.

[7] Eusebius, *De laudibus Constantini*, c. 3.5.

[8] McShane, *La Romanitas et le pape Léon le Grand* (Montreal, 1979), pp. 38, 41, suggests that Orosius and, to a lesser extent, Augustine addressed the problem by mini-

awkward synthesis between Romans and barbarians, it is not surprising that some Christians during this period, as McShane has observed, questioned whether such an organizing principle as divine providence existed at all.[9] Sulpitius Severus of Aquitania (d. 420) remarked in his *Chronicorum libri ii* that Roman territory was occupied by barbarian tribes whose peoples were so insidiously intertwined with the Roman armies, cities, and provinces that they lived among the Romans, yet did not adopt their customs.[10] The ensuing confusion inspired Christian intellectuals to emphasize and develop a kind of Christian *romanitas* that suffused Roman virtues with a Christian ideology that, I suggest, not only provided them with a continuous identity, but addressed some of the festering anxieties and genuine social problems posed by the invasions. It is my claim, as I shall argue below, that Leo, without saying so directly, imbued his thought, his christology, his theology with the Christian virtues that were to transform the Rome that was crumbling, "its corporate imperial identity," as Frend put it, having been "reduced to its … inhabitants," into the beginning of a Christian empire that would be more fully envisioned by Gregory the Great, and finally by Charlemagne (emperor, 800–814).[11]

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mizing the importance of the fall of Rome to Alaric in 410. Orosius pointed out that Alaric, a Christian (though an Arian) had penetrated the walls of Rome when Radagaise, a pagan, had failed to. After a three-day siege, Alaric spared the city. Ibid., p. 41. Orosius, *Historiarum adversum paganos libri vii*, VII.37. See Chesnut, "Eusebius, Augustine, Orosius," p. 687; on Eusebius' view of history in comparison to Augustine, see ibid., pp. 690–692. See also W.H.C. Frend, "Augustine's reactions to the barbarian invasions of the West, 407–417: some comparisons with his western contemporaries," *Augustinus* 39 (1994), pp. 241–255. Starnes has argued that Augustine did not simply answer the pagan critics, but showed "the nature of the Christian world order that had already replaced that of Rome." C. Starnes, "Augustine's audience in the first ten books of the City of God and the logic of his argument," *SP* 27 (1993), p. 393.

[9] McShane, *La Romanitas*, p. 37. It was left to the writers and pastors of the church to respond to such doubts.

[10] Sulpitius Severus, *Chronicorum libri ii*, c. 3. There was a general reluctance on the part of Christians to blame the emperors for the barbarian invasions. Jerome, for instance, blamed Stilico, who, he said, used Roman resources to arm Rome's enemies against them. See McShane, *La Romanitas*, p. 37.

[11] W.H.C. Frend, "Augustine and Orosius on the end of the ancient world," *Augustinian Studies* 20 (1989), p. 15. On the problem of Augustine's secular audience, see N. McLynn, "Augustine's Roman Empire," in eds. M. Vessey, K. Pollmann, *History, Apocalypse, and the Secular Imagination: New Essays on Augustine's City of God* (Bowling Green, OH, 1999), pp. 29–44.

First, he and other Christian intellectuals would have to address the senators and other members of the pagan elite who saw in their current misfortunes the punishment of the angry pagan gods for whom sacrifices had ceased under the Christian emperor, Theodosius the Great (emperor, 379–395). Augustine identified those who had made such an unlikely connection as "the ignorant [who] say drought and Christianity go together hand in hand." These were the same well-educated men, the refugee aristocrats who "were proud of their Roman heritage and assiduous in its preservation," whom he charged with strategically ignoring the disasters of pre-Christian times in order to incite the uneducated masses against Christianity.[12] It was to remind such pagan opportunists of the numerous pre-Christian calamities that Orosius of Bracara (d. 420) in *Historiarum adversum paganos libri vii*, Salvian of Marseille (b. c. 400) in *De gubernatione Dei*, Sulpitius Severus in *Chronicorum libri ii*, and most famously Augustine in *De civitate Dei* set out to show that Christians, or to put it more precisely, Christianity, was not the cause of the barbarian invasions. Far from being responsible for the misfortunes suffered by the Romans, the Christian religion was credited by Augustine with having prevented the barbarians from inflicting grievous harm. "For Christ's name's sake the barbarians, in contravention of all custom and law of war, threw open as sanctuaries the largest churches, and in many instances showed such reverence to Christ that not only his genuine servants, but even those who in their terror feigned themselves to be so, were exempted from all those hardships which by the custom of war may lawfully be inflicted."[13] He drew upon the lessons of history to prove that long before the Christians arrived on the

[12] Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, II.3. They had fled Rome and settled in North Africa. T.S. de Bruyn, "Jerusalem versus Rome: the Religious and Philosophical Context of Augustine's Assessment of the Roman Empire in the City of God," in ed. W.E. Helleman, *Christianity and the Classics* (London, 1990), p. 54. See G.J.-P. O'Daly, "Thinking Through History: Augustine's Method in the 'City of God' and its Ciceronian Dimension," *Augustinian Studies* 30 (1999), p. 51, who argues that Augustine was perhaps influenced by Cicero in linking Rome's political achievements to the virtues of self-sacrifice and valor.

[13] Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, II.2. '… quod propter eius nomen contra institutum moremque bellorum eis, quo confugerent, religiosa et amplissima loca barbari libera praebuerunt, adque in multis famulatum deditum Christo non solum verum, sed etiam timore confictum sic honorauerunt, ut, quod in eos belli iure fieri licuisset, inlicitum sibi esse iudicarent.'

scene the pagans had suffered far worse calamities,[14] even while their sacrifices were being performed regularly.[15]

Augustine subtly reframed the question posed by the sack of Rome in 410. It was no longer a matter of determining whose religious failures were responsible, but rather of understanding that divine providence would ultimately unfold in a different sphere entirely and according to a different set of principles.[16] His disciple Orosius followed a similar, though far less nuanced, strategy by imagining history to consist in a series of calamities that included war, disease, famine, earthquake, flood, fire, lightning, hail, and parricides.[17] His purpose in enumerating such historical disasters was to convince the reader that suffering had defined the human experience well before Christianity and that "I found that the days of the past [were] not only equally oppressive as these, but also the more wretched the more distant they are from the solace of true religion, so that it has properly become clear by this investigation that avaricious bloody death prevailed, as long as the religion which forbade bloodshed was unknown."[18] Not the geopolitical consequences of war, but rather its miseries and those of the other human afflictions were the subject of his treatise.[19] Even in such a

[14] Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, I, II. In books I and II, Augustine recounted the evils that both Rome and the imperial provinces had suffered before sacrifices had been prohibited, which, he said, would have been attributed to Christians if Christianity had already been in existence or had already prohibited their rites. *De civitate Dei*, IV.2. See also, ibid. I.36.

[15] Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, IV.2.

[16] de Bruyn, "Jerusalem versus Rome," p. 58. For Augustine, the city of God, the heavenly city, was the place where love for God prevailed and where God could be experienced forever.

[17] Chesnut, "Eusebius, Augustine, Orosius," pp. 697–698, argues that although Orosius was supposed to follow Augustine's view, he was probably more influenced by Eusebius. On Augustine's and Orosius' opposing reactions to the sack of Rome, see Frend, "Augustine and Orosius on the end of the ancient world," pp. 1–38.

[18] Orosius, *Historiarum adversum paganos libri vii*, I.prologue. 'Nanctus sum enim praeteritos dies non solum aeque ut hos graves, verum etiam tanto atrocius miseros quanto longius a remedio verae religionis alienos: ut merito hac scrutatione claruerit regnasse mortem avidam sanguinis dum ignoratur religio quae prohiberet a sanguine.' Orosius thought that the pagans had been corrupted not by a decline of individual morals and virtues, as Augustine thought, but by their failure of collective courage, made clear by their decision to destroy Carthage. Inglebert, *Les Romains Chrétiens*, p. 580.

[19] Orosius, *Historiarum adversum paganos libri vii*, III. preface. According to Orosius, God had permitted the invasions in order to facilitate the barbarians' conversion to Christianity. See McShane, *La Romanitas*, p. 42. On the barbarian problem, see D. Koch-Peters, *Ansichten des Orosius zur Geschichte seiner Zeit* (Frankfurt am Main, 1984),

literal-minded adaptation of Augustinian political history as Orosius betrayed, the underlying question that drove his narrative was the extent of, and reason for, the unending cycle of human suffering at the hands of other human beings.

Orosius' oblique answer to this vexing question was that the presence of Christ's grace after the Incarnation had imbued history with divine significance, making the chaos and confusion of pre-Christian Rome subside considerably.[20] With the advent of Christ came the days of salvation, because of which nothing, not even a Caesar as vile as Caligula (emperor, 37–41), could undermine the *pax romana*.[21] Because this widespread peace had continued during times of Christian persecution, the same lessons of history were read by Orosius' pagan critics to imply that the gods had rewarded such persecuting emperors as Maximianus (emperor, 286–305), during whose reign in the early fourth century "there was no famine at home, no pestilence, no war abroad except voluntary by which their forces could be exercised, not endangered."[22] The challenge for Orosius was to retain the connection between the grace of the Incarnation and the *pax romana* without making the latter the inevitable expression of the former. He accomplished this distinction by arguing that what seemed like peace was actually not peace at all, but only the calm before the storm. The storm he referred to was the persecution not of the Christians, but of the pagans, which occurred during the reign of Constantine a few years later. Construed as the tenth persecution, the last in a long line of persecutions beginning with Nero (emperor, 54–68), it was the final punishment before the coming of the anti-Christ and the last judgment in which the pagans were finally to be persecuted slowly and steadily until their cult was eradicated, their idols destroyed.[23] In making that assessment, Orosius was following Sulpitius Severus and before him, Eusebius: "In effect, it is proclaimed in divine words," Sulpitius said, "that the world was to be visited by ten plagues; and since nine of these have already been

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pp. 183–205; see also E. Isichei, *Political Thinking and Social Experience: Some Christian Interpretations of the Roman Empire from Tertullian to Salvian* (Canterbury, 1964), pp. 90–97.

[20] Orosius, *Historiarum adversum paganos libri vii*, VII.43; V.1.

[21] Orosius, *Historiarum adversum paganos libri vii*, VII.5: Caligula brought his forces to Britain, but found no reason for war, according to Orosius.

[22] Orosius, *Historiarum adversum paganos libri vii*, VII.26.

[23] Orosius, *Historiarum adversum paganos libri vii*, VII.27. See ibid. IV.5: "We who are placed at the end of times …"

endured, what remains will be the last. During this period of time, one marvels at how the Christian religion has prevailed."[24]

This way of understanding history was rejected by Augustine, not only because he did not think that the number of persecutions with which the church was to be afflicted could be definitively stated, but because of its eschatological overtones.[25] Predicting ten persecutions seemed to Augustine arbitrary and subjective, the number having been selected merely because it coincided with the 'ten plagues of Egypt' and, therefore, served eschatological purposes that were at odds with his own more worldly view of history. Rarely did he allude to the end time (the '*parousia*'), which was, in his view, only a distant event in the future: "Maybe it is here in the city, but someday the city will come to an end."[26] That reticence distinguished him not only from Sulpitius, but also from Orosius and many of his contemporaries, who found in the disasters of the barbarian wars evidence that the *parousia* was, if not imminent, then securely within the realm of human calculation. Orosius, as Inglebert has remarked, introduced an eschatological computation that attributed fourteen centuries to the combined history of Babylon and Rome, during which the *parousia*, preceded by the last persecution of the anti-Christ, was to occur.[27]

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[24] Sulpitius Severus, *Chronicorum libri ii*, II.33. 'Etenim sacris vocibus decem plagis mundum afficiendum pronuntiatum est: ita cum iam VIIII fuerint, quae superest ultima erit. Hoc temporum tractu mirum est quantum invaluerit religio christiana.' Sulpitius identified four stages of history: the empire of the Chaldeans, the empire of the Persians, the empire of Alexander the Great, and finally, the Roman empire. Ibid. II.3.

[25] Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, XVIII.52. Inglebert describes three eschatological views: the Judeo-Christian tradition of the destruction of an evil world; the Roman Christian tradition of Eusebius, which unites Christianity with the political history of Rome; and the Gallo-Roman tradition of Jerome and Sulpitius, for whom moral ruin presaged the end of time. *Les Romains Chrétiens*, p. 384, n. 102, discussing S. Prete, "Degenerazione e decadenza morale nell'escatologia di Sulpicio Severo," *Augustinianum* 18 (1978), pp. 245–256. On periodization in Augustine, see J.M. Alonso-Núñez, "Augustine's chronology and the theory of world empires in 'The City of God'," ed. C. Deroux, *Studies in Latin Literature and Roman History* 9 (Brussells, 1979), pp. 487–501.

[26] Augustine, *Serm.* 81.9.

[27] Orosius' view of eschatology is taken from H. Inglebert, *Les Romains Chrétiens*, p. 492. Leo neither perceived this world as fast coming to an end, nor as continuing indefinitely into the future. Perched "in these last days," Roman Christians were to receive the divine mercy that was the providential plan for salvation. (Leo, *Serm.* 33.1.2, *Quamuis sciam*, 443). For Sulpitius' calculations of the end time, see Inglebert, *Les Romains Chrétiens*, p. 384, n. 104.

Because Leo rejected such eschatological musings as misguided, it was possible for him to imagine a Christian world that was poised at the edge of its continuous unfolding in the course of human history and its place in the providential plan for salvation. The result was a new idea of the world that seemed to emend the heavy-handed view of providence found in Orosius, Sulpitius Severus, and others, and to make Augustine's 'city of God' a lived reality, as I shall suggest below.

To understand how Leo arrived at this distinction, it is useful to consider the options for understanding history that his predecessors provided. History for Augustine was not the continuous and providentially significant unfolding of divine intervention into every aspect of human affairs that such thinkers as Orosius, Sulpitius Severus, and Salvian imagined. It was the evils of war, the natural disasters, and the enlargement of empires (which were, nonetheless, under the power of God) that the ancient historians and sacred Scriptures recorded.[28] The thoroughgoing Christian history that Orosius composed, in contrast, structured time according to the advent of Christ and ascribed providential significance to the *pax romana* of Augustus (emperor, BC 27—AD 14), the height of Roman military and political accomplishment that was the historical context for Jesus' birth. History was divided into three parts: from the beginning of the world until the founding of Rome; from the history of Rome until the end of the Republic; and from Augustus and the birth of Christ until the present day,[29] the third and final period that was thought to bring about salvation.[30] Consistent with his more mundane view of history, Augustine bestowed no particular importance upon the Augustan period, the *pax romana* that inspired so many late Roman Christian intellectuals, including not only Orosius, but also Origen (d. c. 254), Eusebius, Rufinus, Paulinus of Nola (d. 431), and Chromatius, the bishop of Aquileia (d. c. 406–407), to find in imperial Rome the unfolding of providential events.[31] Surprisingly, Sulpitius was like Augustine in having nothing to say about the *pax romana*

[28] Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, IV.2. According to Inglebert, Augustine was silent regarding imperial Rome because he was skeptical of the theories of Eusebius: a Christian emperor could not make a city of God on earth. Inglebert, *Les Romains Chrétiens*, pp. 454–455.

[29] Orosius, *Historiarum adversum paganos libri vii*, I.2; III.8; VI.17; VI.22; VII.2; VI.20: he thought that in every respect the empire of Caesar might be proven to have been prepared for the coming of Christ. Origen was the first Christian thinker to connect the birth of Christ to the *pax romana* of the Augustan age.

[30] Orosius, *Historiarum adversum paganos libri vii*, VII.3.

[31] Inglebert, *Les Romains Chrétiens*, p. 350.

that was the historical context for the advent of Christ, not because he quarreled with the view that history was divinely guided. He was silent because this was the history recorded by the gospels, and he "did not venture to touch on [it] … lest the character of [his] condensed work should, in any measure, detract from the dignity of the events."[32] That 'condensed work' was his ecclesiastical history, which began with Adam and concluded with a brief account of the Priscillian controversy.[33] Like Orosius, his purpose in constructing such a comprehensive work was to show that God had regularly intervened in all of human history in order to reward virtue and piety and to punish heresy and vice. Salvian similarly construed history as divinely guided, the logical consequence of which unfolded in all its simplicity and harshness when he praised the barbarians as virtuous for having successfully invaded the empire and condemned the Christians for their military failures. "I shall prove clearly with God's help," he said, "that His favors were as just to [the ancient Romans] in the past as His severity is just towards us in the present. I shall prove, in addition, that His favor by which they were exalted was as deserved then as we are deserving of punishment now."[34] Writing one year after the fall of Carthage to the Vandals in 439, Salvian, according to McShane, was determined to defend the justice of divine providence, even if that meant ascribing greater virtue to the Romans than to the Christians.[35]

Although Augustine agreed that history was governed by the will and providence of God,[36] it remained for him mainly a terrestrial

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[32] Sulpitius Severus, *Chronicorum libri ii*, II.27. '… attingere non ausus, ne quid forma praecisi operis rerum dignitatibus deminuerit.'

[33] His purpose in writing the *Chronicorum libri ii* was "to give a condensed account of those things that are set forth in the sacred Scriptures from the beginning of the world … down to a period within our own remembrance." 'Res a mundi exordio sacris litteris editas breviter constringere … usque ad nostram memoriam carptim dicere aggressus sum.' Ibid. I.1.

[34] Salvian, *De gubernatione Dei*, VII.1, p. 185. 'adprobabimus tam iustum tunc erga illos fuisse domini favorem quam nunc erga nos iustum severitatem, et tam dignum illud fuisse quod Romanos tunc deus auxilio suo extulit, quam nunc dignum esse quod punimur.' See generally D. Lambert, "The Uses of Decay: History in Salvian's *De Gubernatione Dei*," in eds. M. Vessey, K. Pollmann, *History, Apocalypse, and the Secular Imagination: New Essays on Augustine's City of God* (Bowling Green, OH, 1999), pp. 115–130; Isichei, *Political Thinking*, pp. 98–108.

[35] McShane, *La Romanitas*, p. 42; R.B. Eno, "Christian Reaction to the Barbarian Invasions and the Sermons of Quodvultdeus," in ed. D.G. Hunter, *Preaching in the Patristic Age* (New York, 1989), pp. 146–150.

[36] Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, IV.28. The Romans, in Augustine's view, could not have attained dominion if the true God were unwilling.

enterprise, the place where, as Sulpitius, Orosius, and Salvian had noted, virtues were rewarded and vices punished, but not the place from which the elect were chosen and eternal rewards bestowed.[37] Against his pagan critics who claimed that the Roman empire had been rewarded with vast territories because of its devotion to the pagan deities, Augustine's new way of construing history saw Rome's virtuous conduct as the single and discrete cause of its worldly success. "Let us go on to consider," he said, "what virtues of the Romans they were which the true God, in whose power are also the kingdoms of the earth, condescended to help in order to raise the empire and also for what reason He did so."[38] More than anything else, the Romans' virtuous pursuit of their desire for glory and honor, a desire that the noble and ignoble shared alike, ensured the longevity and extent of their reign.[39] It was not piety, as his pagan critics claimed, but virtue that was the reason for their earthly rewards.[40]

Although Orosius agreed that virtue was rewarded in the course of history, he construed differently its role in the divine system of reward and punishment. We are told that after Caligula was murdered, the Senate passed a number of decrees to restore the state to its former status and to eliminate each and every member of the imperial family. When Claudius came to power, he annulled these decrees by granting clemency to all whom the Senate had targeted for vengeance. It was thanks to this clemency, said Orosius, that Rome was granted the privilege of having Peter come to Rome to preach the Christian faith. His converts, the fledgling Christian community of Rome, immediately became that city's protectors and, merely by their presence, prevented a usurper named Furius Camillus Scribonianus from carrying out a civil

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[37] Augustine, nonetheless, saw the terrestrial city as imbued with such Christian virtues as faith, hope, and charity. R. Dodaro, "Augustine of Hippo between the secular city and the City of God," in eds. P.-Y. Fux, J.-M. Roessli, O. Wermelinger, *Augustinus Afer: saint Augustin, africanité et universalité: actes du colloque international, Alger-Annaba, 1–7 avril 2001* (Fribourg, 2003), pp. 287–305, esp. 295.

[38] Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, IV.12.

[39] Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, V.12. The Romans had no reason to complain about the justice of God, because "they have received their rewards." Ibid. V.15. He meant that God had rewarded their virtues by permitting such a vast and glorious empire. On the virtues of the Romans, see de Bruyn, "Jerusalem versus Rome," pp. 59–61.

[40] Inglebert, *Les Romains Chrétiens*, p. 475. It is by distinguishing the empire, as such, from its religion that Augustine conceived of the two cities. De Bruyn, "Jerusalem versus Rome," pp. 64–67. But it was also by distinguishing what it was that each city loved. G. Downey, "Ethical City, the Secular City, and the City of God," *Anglican Theological Review* 56 (1974), pp. 34–41.

war. "And so let anyone deny that this rising tyranny and that threatening civil war was divinely checked on account of the coming of the Apostle Peter and of the tender shoots, as it were, of Christians, still a few in number, breaking forth to proclaim their holy faith."[41] The logical extension of his argument was that the pagan deities could not similarly claim to have suppressed a civil war. In contrast to Augustine, virtue for Orosius was not rewarded in history with a vast and stable empire, but with the establishment of the Christian faith, pious devotion to which supplanted the virtue of Republican Rome in order to bring about the Roman peace.[42] For Leo it was finally the victory of the church, as Bartnik has observed, that guaranteed the preservation of Rome.[43]

By making piety irrelevant to virtue in shaping the history of Rome, Augustine, more than any other thinker in the late Roman West, grappled deeply with the problem of why the good suffer. As a result of the barbarian invasions, both pagans and Christians were asking why the miseries of war had been indiscriminately inflicted upon the pious and impious.[44] To answer that question, Augustine separated the destiny of the empire from that of the church by imagining two realms, the 'terrestrial city' and the 'city of God', the eternal city where "none are born, for none die… [where] there rises not the sun on the good and the evil, but the sun of righteousness protects the good alone."[45] While piety was rewarded in the city of God, and only in the city of God, it was the terrestrial city that rewarded virtue. That did not mean that only the immoral suffered. Because he construed Rome's present misfortunes as the result of profligate conduct by the descendants of its ancient heroes, the same heroes whose virtues had shaped the destiny of the empire and ensured its worldly success, the good and bad alike were the victims of their moral failings. History's punishing vengeance did not distinguish among them. The apparent unfairness of human suffering was, therefore, explained by interpreting the justice of history in collective, rather than individual, terms. Augustine complained that the descendants of Rome had caused more damage by their lack of virtue than the barbarians had by razing its walls, "For in this ruin there

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[41] Orosius, *Historiarum adversum paganos libri vii*, VII.6.

[42] Leo agreed with Orosius.

[43] C. Bartnik, "L'interprétation théologique de la crise de l'empire Romain par Léon le Grand," *RHE* 63 (1968), p. 783.

[44] Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, II.2.

[45] Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, V.16.

fell stones and timbers; but in the ruin those profligates effected, there fell, not the mural, but the moral bulwarks and ornaments of the city, and their hearts burned with passions more destructive than the flames which consumed their houses."[46] In spite of their historical distance, the virtuous persons of Rome's glorious past were relevant to Christians in the present, for they were to serve as examples to be imitated by "the citizens of that eternal city during their sojourn here."[47] That is about as close as Augustine ever came to perceiving a divine purpose in the unfolding of Roman history.

2. *A new idea of history emerges*

Although Leo never wrote a history of Rome along the lines of Augustine, Orosius, Sulpitius Severus, or Salvian,[48] his view of history can be surmised from remarks he made, scattered throughout his sermons. History, for Leo, was thoroughly infused with divine intention, in nearly every respect and throughout every period governed by the providence of God. Perhaps it was against such writers as Orosius, who saw in the present days an ever quickening of God's intervention, or as Eusebius, who viewed the conversion of Constantine as second only to the *pax romana* for its providential significance, that Leo insisted that all human history, from its origins to the present, was the gradual unfolding of God's plan for salvation.[49] "No, it is not that God has just recently come up with a plan for attending to human affairs, nor that it has taken him this long to show compassion. Rather, he laid down from the very 'foundation of the worlds' one and the same 'cause of salvation' for all. For the grace of God, by which the entire assembly of saints

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[46] Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, II.2. Augustine distinguished the Roman pagans of his time, who were "unmanly profligates," from the genuine Romans, "whose famous deeds are recorded in history and celebrated everywhere." Orosius thought that God prevented indiscriminate slaughter because the city contained both the pious, who were deserving of grace, and the impious, who were deserving of punishment. *Historiarum adversum paganos libri vii*, VII.37.

[47] Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, V.16.

[48] Bartnik attributed special significance to the fact that Leo was neither a historian nor a theologian of history: "His vision thus reflects less the theoretical speculations of specialists than the views common to the catholic *intelligensia* of his time …" C. Bartnik, "L'interprétation théologique …," p. 746.

[49] Leo, *Serm.* 23.4, *Nota quidem sunt vobis*, c. 442; Orosius, *Historiarum adversum paganos libri vii*, VII.35.

has always been justified, was not initiated at the time when Christ was born, but augmented."[50] Although Leo may have thought that Orosius placed too much emphasis on the intervention of God in the reign of Theodosius, for instance, who "under the guidance of God, gained a bloodless victory," he, nonetheless, would have found in such writings a view of history that was generally congenial to his own. In both writers the past was understood to contain at least some of the elements that prefigured the future salvation. It was to lend "credence to past events by the prediction of the future and the proof of subsequent happenings" that Orosius decided to consult ancient Greek and Latin histories describing the origin of the world. The similar view of the past that informed Leo's presentation of history derived almost exclusively from the Old Testament, in which the testimonies of the prophets were the figures that announced, through shadows and types, the future salvation.[51]

Because the biblical past was intimately connected with the continuous unveiling of history, there was no sense in which the events of Roman history were the necessary precondition for the salvific plan. The empire rose and would presumably fall without its link to the fate of the church being inevitable. Leo was able to hold this view without compromising his providential understanding of history because the Roman past that he imagined was subordinate to, and merely an unwitting player in, the providential plan that drove the biblical narrative. Since divine providence governed all aspects of a history that included the Passion (as we shall see below), Leo thought that everything that was going to be decided had been decided and that future events had already been accomplished. He differed from Orosius in making the events of the Roman empire not simply the necessary expression of a providential plan, but rather the byproduct of a history governed by God.

Such a thoroughgoing providential view of history distinguished Leo from Augustine, who was reluctant to ascribe each of its events to the workings of providence, even while he admitted that it governed the extent and duration of temporal kingdoms. "We do not attribute the power of giving kingdoms and empires to any save to the true God, who gives happiness in the kingdom of heaven to the pious alone, but gives kingly power on earth both to the pious and impious, as it may

[50] Leo, *Serm.* 23.4, 442.
[51] Leo, *Serm.* 69.2, *Magnitudo quidem*, 4 April 454.

please Him, whose good pleasure is always just."[52] It is not surprising that Augustine rejected the view commonly held among his contemporaries, and later championed by Leo, that every detail of Scripture had divine significance, claiming instead that some events were narrated that had no significance, but served as something to which the more significant events were attached.[53] The mechanics of musical instruments was the metaphor he used, the strings of which made music when struck because they were supported by an underlying, interconnected structure that was the necessary, though not the immediate, cause of the sound. This way of reading history, which interpreted only the salient figures and types of the biblical narrative, enabled him to retain the overarching providential structure he yearned for, without reducing the actions of history to an unyielding denouement.[54] Some events, in other words, just happened, while others extended beyond the underlying structure of the biblical narrative, resounding like a note from the interconnected parts of a musical instrument.

The way in which Leo and Augustine conceived of the paradox of fate versus free will accounted for the difference in their understanding of divine providence and its role in human history. It is true that both men thought that fate was the astrological doctrine of pagans who ascribed human events to an order fixed by something other than the will of God and human beings.[55] What they found objectionable in this understanding of history was that stars rather than God were made to govern human destiny, for Augustine had insisted that the rise and fall of kingdoms "does not take place without the providence of God."[56] Even when he broadened his definition of 'fate' to encompass the will and providence of God, and thereby accommodated those who called "the will or the power of God itself by the name of fate," he still carved out a place for human freedom.[57] Neither the stars nor the providence of God were to make human beings the passive objects of external commands,[58] for human freedom was not to be eclipsed by providence,

[52] Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, V.21; *cf.* ibid. XVIII.2. 'Non tribuamus dandi regni adque imperii potestatem nisi Deo vero, qui dat felicitatem in regno caelorum solis piis; regnum vero terrenum et piis et inpiis, sicut ei placet, cui nihil iniuste placet.'

[53] Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, XVI.2.3.

[54] I am grateful to Philip Rousseau for his insights.

[55] Related, but opposite, to it was the pagan view that all events were fortuitous and therefore without causes. Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, V.1.

[56] Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, XVIII.2.

[57] Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, V.1.

[58] Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, V.2.

nor providence by human freedom. His rejection of a typologically-driven reading of the past enabled him easily to embrace the paradox of people acting freely in the context of a history guided gently by providence.

Leo was especially concerned that the astrological doctrine of fate not only undermined freedom in the obvious sense just mentioned, but also misconstrued the entire Christian narrative beginning with Adam and culminating in Christ.[59] True human freedom could be attained not simply by making people responsible for their actions, but by acknowledging the frailty of the human condition, exemplified both by Adam's transgression and Christ's subsequent Incarnation as a vulnerable human being. With Christ's human sorrows and fears as their model, people were to embrace their human weakness as the source of their altruism in the midst of suffering. Astrological fatalism made it impossible to administer rewards and punishments because it improperly replaced this messy reality of human imperfection with what it perceived to be the perfect rationality of the cosmos. This negation of the human experience that was the cornerstone of his thought troubled Leo greatly.

Augustine tackled the problem of freedom in the context of providence by resorting to the technical tools of dialectical argument. Starting with the assumption that God is omniscient, he posited that God foreknows 'what is in the power of human wills'. Since God who foreknows this power does not foreknow 'nothing', he reasoned that it does not follow that 'nothing' is in the power of human wills. The conclusion that this unyielding logic generated was that He who foreknows 'what is in the power of human wills' does not foreknow 'nothing', but rather 'something'; therefore 'something' must be 'in the power of human wills'. That 'something' was ultimately the power of human beings to choose the love of God over and above the narcissism of the self. While for Leo, the paradox of human freedom operating in a providential cosmos was embraced by acknowledging the weakness of the human condition, for Augustine it was addressed by his confidence in the rationality of human argumentation and in the capacity of human beings to choose God over self, the necessary precondition for true human freedom. "Therefore we are by no means compelled," said Augustine, "either, retaining the prescience of God, to take away

[59] See c. 1.3, above.

the freedom of the will, or, retaining the freedom of the will, to deny that He is prescient of future things, which is impious. But we embrace both."[60] Those events that happened contrary to human will were not to be relegated to the fatalism of the stars or to the failure of human dignity, but to be reassigned to the province of God, whose divine will guided the currents down which the human will navigated in its quest for love.[61] Augustine carved out a niche for human beings that endowed their individual wills with freedom, but made the quality of their lives depend upon the rise and fall of empires, whose fortunes were the justice of a far-off God that acted in history remotely.

In a thoroughly providential context Leo addressed the problem of fate as essentially one of causes. It was especially with respect to Christ's Passion that he grappled with the relationship between fate and human freedom and its consequences for his broader conception of justice. In doing so, he made the Passion narrative the paradigm for understanding how God intervened in history and how history and its players served the plan for salvation. Consistent with that plan, Christ was crucified, died, and was buried at a predetermined time,[62] while Herod Antipas, Pontius Pilate, and the Jews were its sometimes oblivious, but nonetheless necessary, instruments: Herod, because in mistaking Jesus' eternal kingdom for a temporal one he plotted "death for the author of salvation;"[63] Pontius Pilate, because he was the reluctant accomplice who either ordered or permitted Jesus to be flogged and crucified at the insistence of the leaders of the Jews;[64] and the Jews, because they were the blind and ignorant betrayers who set out "upon that wild and blood-drenched plan as 'fat bulls, many calves', raging beasts, 'mad dogs', so that [they] might hand over to death that 'author of Life' and 'Lord of Glory'."[65] The story of the Passion was cast as a series of events carried out by figures whose actions were apparently, though not completely, subverted to the greater salvific plan.

In recounting the Passion narrative as a sequence of events that unfolded necessarily, Leo departed from such contemporaries as Augustine, Orosius, Salvian, and Sulpitius Severus, all of whom had simply omitted it altogether from their treatment of political and ecclesiasti-

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60 Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, V.10.
61 Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, V.10.
62 Leo, *Serm.* 67.5, *Semper quidem, dilectissimi*, 28 March 454, p. 294.
63 Leo, *Serm.* 31.2, *Celebrato proxime die*, 441, p. 133; Leo, *Serm.* 32.1, p. 135.
64 Leo, *Serm.* 61.2, *Cum multis modis*, 4 April 445 p. 265.
65 Leo, *Serm.* 54.2, *Inter omnia*, 5 April 442, p. 236.

cal history for reasons that only Sulpitius expressed: he did not wish to narrate events that were recorded in the gospels.[66] It might be surmised that the others simply did not view the circumstances of the Passion, where salvation, but not worldly history unfolded, as among the problematic events that needed to be extricated from the fate of the church. The only time Sulpitius emphasized the historical context for the Passion was in describing Herod as a foreigner, a "son of Antipater of Askelon" who had asked for and "received the sovereignty of Judea from the people and senate of Rome." Portraying Herod first and foremost as a foreigner was meant to highlight the unavoidability of the Passion events by suggesting that the people of Israel, deprived of a ruler from the line of Judah, would be that much more inclined to accept Christ. Leo was similarly impressed that with the reign of Herod, a foreign king, the legitimate succession of leadership had broken down and the authority of the priests had been undermined. In keeping with his typological construction of history, both events signaled that the prophecy from the book of Genesis ("there will not be lacking a prince from Judah, nor a leader from his loins, until the one for whom it has been reserved should come, and he it is whom the nations await") had been fulfilled.[67]

It might be assumed that the providential design of the Passion narrative raised difficult questions about the nature and extent of human freedom in a world whose overarching purpose had already been devised. Surprisingly, Leo tackled such questions not by pondering the nature of human action in the light of God's providence, but by considering how one might reconcile the malice of Herod Antipas, Pilate, and the Jews in conspiring to persecute Christ with the divine justice of God's plan.[68] Because that justice had been perfectly conceived according to the divine rationality, there was no easy sense in which it could be thought to facilitate its plan through the action of evil. The creative way in which Leo contemplated this paradox of a just, omnipotent God, whose actions unfolded in the context of an imperfect world, was by distinguishing 'the will to murder' from 'the will to die'. These two different types of willing were thought to arise from different sources, 'the will to murder' from the malice of human beings, and 'the will to die' from the divine plan for justice. What his theological reading of the

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[66] Sulpitius Severus, *Chronicorum libri ii*, II. 27.
[67] Leo, *Serm.* 33.2, 443, p. 139, quoting *Gen* 49.10.
[68] Leo, *Serm.* 67.2, *Semper quidem*, 28 March 454, p. 292.

Passion narrative had told him was foreknown about the malice of the Jews and what divine providence had decreed regarding the Passion of Christ were regarded as different and contrary intentions, the one reflecting the space for human freedom and the other submitting that freedom to the overarching justice.[69] It did not matter that the malice of human freedom happened to facilitate the divine plan.

Leo also distinguished the divine plan, the predestined sequence of events that was the Passion narrative, from the human causes that made it so. Although Jesus wanted to suffer the wrath of his accusers, he neither caused that wrath, nor orchestrated the crime, but simply yielded to their actions.[70] The expression of that desire was interpreted as his permitting the physical suffering, which, knowing that it might occur, he accepted, but did not compel. Preserving the freedom of Jesus and of those whose actions furthered the Passion narrative was so important to Leo that he insisted, paradoxically, that the human events that were the cause of the Passion might have been stopped, even while he maintained the view that salvation unfolded inevitably.[71] The result was a fluid understanding of human freedom that accounted for the presence of evil and the imperfection of this world in the larger context of salvation history. Even the seemingly inevitable action undertaken by Herod, Pilate, and the Jews did not, in Leo's view, reduce them to unwitting cogs in the machine of redemption. Their will for malice was the genuine expression of human weakness in a world whose failures of justice were the expectation of a fallen humanity. They acted as human beings were wont to act and were, in that sense, free. The implication was that the principles of justice might be better served after the Incarnation.

It was in this broader shift from history to prophecy that certain choices, outcomes, and events were lifted from their narrative context and given special significance. By distinguishing the sequence of events orchestrated by people (which resulted in the physical suffering of Jesus) from those orchestrated by the divine (which brought about salvation), Leo contemplated deeply how the Roman world, as well as the individual failings of the people within it, might be used to facilitate

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[69] Leo, *Serm.* 67.2, 28 March 454, p. 292.

[70] Leo, *Serm.* 67.3.2, 28 March 454, p. 293.

[71] Leo, *Serm.* 67.3, 28 March 454, p. 292: "Finally, so disparate were the motives of the crucified and those crucifying that while what was undertaken by Christ could not be abolished, what was committed by those others could indeed have been put to a halt."

redemption. The Jews, Pilate, and Herod the Great were interpreted as the unwitting players in the divine plan not because they had been stripped of human freedom, but because Jesus had made good use of the materials, no matter how objectionable, at his disposal.[72] 'Wickedness', 'betrayal', and 'malice' were transformed from the evil attributes generated by human freedom and responsibility gone awry into the carefully chosen 'materials' by which divine justice might be achieved. 'Wickedness' was ascribed to Jews whose actions served the purposes of salvation and the divine plan that God had decreed.[73] 'Betrayal' was the *modus operandi* of Pilate, whose condemnation of Jesus, whom he knew to be innocent, added the "'blood of a just man' to that of a wicked people."[74] The 'malice' of Herod the Great was his brutal plan to kill Jesus by slaughtering the infants,[75] which had unknowingly furthered the plan for redemption when news of his intention spread and Jesus was taken to Egypt for protection, that "a nation which had not yet cast superstition from its heart would receive truth as its guest."[76] The implication was that God who foreknew the individual weaknesses of each of the key players had used those weaknesses to further His plan. Fallen and failing humanity had, after all, made such a plan necessary. Divine intention could also be read in the more benign elements of creation, in the recurrence of days and months, in the cycles of the seasons that were the pages of its sacred rules. In learning to interpret what was written there, souls and bodies were trained to manifest holiness.[77] Beneath such notions was Leo's insistence, against the Manichaeans, that every aspect of creation, including the evil committed by individual persons, could be transformed into an instrument of goodness, because every aspect of creation was governed by the justice of its laws.

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[72] By this reasoning, even the persecutions were thought to benefit the Christian faith. See, *e.g.*, Sulpitius Severus, *Chronicorum libri ii*, II.31.

[73] Leo, *Serm.* 52.5, *Sacramentum*, 16 March 441, p. 229. Augustine distinguished good and bad uses of the world: "For the good ones use the world to that purpose, namely in order to enjoy God, while the evil ones, on the contrary, want to use God in order to enjoy the world." 'Boni quippe ad hoc utuntur mundo, ut fruantur Deo; mali autem contra, ut fruantur mundo, uti volunt Deo.' *De civitate Dei*, XV.7.

[74] Leo, *Serm.* 59.2, *Sermone proximo*, 19 April 444, p. 255.

[75] Leo, *Serm.* 32.3, *Gaudete in Domino*, 442, p. 137.

[76] Leo, *Serm.* 32.1, 442, p. 136.

[77] Leo, *Serm.* 91.1, *Devotionem fidelium*, 453, p. 383. No matter how objectionable were the things of this world, Leo never thought that Christians should avoid them. That would have sounded too much like the teachings of the Manichaeans that he so abhorred. On Leo and the value of the terrestrial realm, see McShane, *La Romanitas*, pp. 82–83.

The same basic premise was made to apply to the more mundane events of history, which Leo construed as the canvas upon which the providence of God had painted, and would continue to paint, the broad strokes of His plan. Like Ambrose and Prudentius (d. c. 413), Leo, as McShane has observed, was convinced that the unity of the Roman laws and language would facilitate the diffusion of Christianity.[78] Imperial Rome, in particular, was thought to promote the spread of Christianity by linking neighboring regions and kingdoms under a single rule, thereby making ideas and proclamations spread that much more quickly and efficiently throughout the vast expanse of the Roman empire.[79] Through learning to read the elements of creation human beings were imbued with the capacity to perceive how providence governed history.

In attributing divine significance to the imperial form of rule, Leo was not entirely original. The same idea had been developed more completely and effectively by Eusebius, who unraveled the words of the Latin poet Virgil and the testimony of the Erythraean Sibyl to find there prophecies of the advent of Christ. Tiberius (emperor, 14–37), during whose reign that advent had occurred, was a good emperor who, according to Eusebius, readily supported Christianity by threatening death to anyone who made accusations against Christians.[80] As implausible as it sounds, Eusebius promoted this positive view of early imperial Rome in order to connect deeply the fortunes of Christianity with those of the Roman state. He was determined to find in the reign of Constantine, under whom persecutions had finally ceased, the triumph of the Christian faith and to view that triumph as the culmination of a long-standing religious political alliance. Because history was the place in which the events of the Incarnation, Passion, and Resurrection had occurred and, therefore, the place in which divine providence had intervened, the association was incontrovertibly positive. In unraveling the implications of this felicitous alliance, Eusebius ascribed to

[78] See McShane, *La Romanitas*, p. 65.

[79] Leo, *Serm.* 82.2, *Omnium quidem sanctarum sollemnitatum*, 29 June 441, p. 353. "That the effect of this inexpressible grace might be spread throughout the whole world, divine providence prepared the Roman empire with such growth to its boundaries that the whole population was neighbor to and bordering upon all peoples everywhere. The work, divinely planned, was especially suitable to the incorporation of many kingdoms under one rule. A general proclamation would quickly reach all the people whom the government of one city was protecting."

[80] Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, II.2.

Tiberius the most sanguine of motives, "that the doctrine of the gospel, unhindered at its beginning, might spread in all directions throughout the world."[81] His confidence in the interrelation between the establishment of the church and the empire that paved its way could not have been stronger.

Although that confidence had declined considerably by the fifth century, Orosius was no less enthusiastic in his praise of the imperial form of government. In it he saw fostered the virtue of humility, according to which people humbled themselves to please a single ruler, the same virtue that was also displayed in the self-effacing obedience of the God/man Christ. Destined to be born during the reign of Augustus Caesar, Christ in the full expression of his humility took on the image of a servant.[82] Orosius made the point even more emphatic by finding in the person and actions of Augustus prophetic utterances of the coming of Christ. We are told that when Augustus returned from Apollonia after his uncle C. Caesar had been murdered, there appeared in the sky a rainbow around the orbit of the sun indicating that Augustus was the most powerful man in the universe, during whose time there would arrive one "who alone had made the sun itself and the whole world, and who ruled over them."[83] A similar prophetic utterance occurred when Augustus, having restored 30,000 slaves to their masters and distributed 44 legions to protect the empire, entered the city of Rome to an ovation and decreed that all debts be remitted and account records restored, whereupon a spring of oil flowed from an inn for one whole day. That 'Christ' in Hebrew means 'anointed' suggested to Orosius "that by this sign [i.e., of the flowing oil] what is more evident than [the fact that] in the days in which Caesar will be reigning all over the world the future birth of Christ will be declared."[84] Orosius saw in this well-timed alliance the providence of God declaring war upon the pagan deities and making the world an appropriate vehicle for the spread of Christianity.

There was no such alliance between Rome and Christianity for Augustine, who ascribed to the empire the more circumscribed role of establishing peace, repressing the vices of nations, and enabling Chris-

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[81] Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, II.2.

[82] Orosius, *Historiarum adversum paganos libri vii*, VI.17.

[83] Orosius, *Historiarum adversum paganos libri vii*, VI.20.

[84] Orosius, *Historiarum adversum paganos libri vii*, VI.20. 'Quo signo quid evidentius quam in diebus Caesaris toto Orbe regnantis futura Christi nativitas declarata est?'

tians to be edified, as Inglebert has suggested.[85] The Roman empire did not prepare the way for Christianity because Christianity required no such preparation. "While Herod therefore reigned in Judea, and Caesar Augustus was emperor at Rome, the state of the republic being already changed, and the world being set at peace by him, Christ, following an earlier prophecy, was born in Bethlehem of Judah."[86] The birth of Christ was no more the cause of the Roman peace than the Roman peace was the reason for the birth of Christ. The two events merely coincided. Roman history was simply the internal evolution of its customs and morals, not the birth of Christ providentially linked to the beginning of the principate.[87] Elsewhere Augustine was willing to connect the advent of Christ with the overarching history of Rome as a single entity. At the foundation of 'western Babylon', which was his metaphor for Rome, were such biblical prophets as Hosea, Amos, and Isaiah, who predicted the Incarnation. It was no coincidence for Augustine that Israel's prophets spoke to the gentile nations at the precise time during which the Roman empire was founded, because it was only then that there were nations to speak to.[88] Even a man as deeply committed as Augustine was to separating the fate of the church from that of the empire was not immune to the idea that Rome itself was providentially connected, through the auspicious timing of this new type of biblical prophecy, to the progress of Christianity.

Leo distinguished his understanding of Roman history from that of Augustine by incorporating, but not slavishly repeating, the Eusebian point of view. He, like Eusebius, conceived of the Roman empire as a vast network of regions united, providentially and auspiciously, under monarchical rule. But he diverged from him not only in subordinating history to prophecy, but also in imagining the city itself, Rome, as religiously significant. Both departures from Eusebius were the necessary foundation for his broader, though unstated, plan to make the 'city of God' real. When the political events of history receded into the biblical structure of prophecy and Rome was reinterpreted as a Christian city, then the basic elements of "Rome's Christian renewal" were,

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[85] Inglebert, *Les Romains Chrétiens*, p. 482.

[86] Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, XVIII.46. 'Regnante ergo Herode in Iudaea, apud Romanos autem iam mutato rei publicae statu imperante Caesare Augusto et per eum orbe pacato natus est Christus secundum praecedentem prophetiam in Bethleem Iudae'.

[87] Inglebert, *Les Romains Chrétiens*, p. 425.

[88] Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, XVIII.27.

in the words of Markus, present. This renewal was based on the fact that Rome was the city of the apostles, the place where Peter, the chief among them, was assigned most appropriately to spread the Christian faith, so that "the light of truth, which was revealed for the salvation of all nations, would then pour itself out more effectively from the head itself through the whole body of the world."[89] Peter was that 'head' who had been charged with fulfilling his mission through the city of Rome, the center and 'body' of the world. Rome was the divinely chosen place where "the opinions of philosophy were about to be trampled on," where "the emptiness of earthly wisdom was to be dissolved," and where "the worship of demons was to be overthrown."[90] In imbuing Rome with a providential significance that was rooted in Peter's apostleship, Leo incorporated and transformed the theology of history expressed by the pagan rhetoricians, philosophers, and poets, beginning with Virgil, who, as Bartnik has remarked, had envisioned the Roman empire, with the city of Rome at its head, as a universal society called to infuse the world with its cultural and social ideals.[91]

Leo's innovation was not only to give new content to those ideals, as I shall suggest below, but to distinguish Christian Rome from pagan Rome. He did not oppose the monarchical government of imperial Rome to the kingdom and republic of early Rome (as Eusebius and his followers had), or the virtues of Republican Rome to the vices of later Rome (according to Augustine).[92] While Romulus and Remus were the twin founders of ancient Rome, who "quarreled to the point of murder," it was through the missionary efforts of the apostles Peter and Paul

[89] Leo, *Serm.* 82.3, 29 June 441, p. 354. McShane and Bartnik note that Leo was persuaded that Rome was an instrument of divine providence because the apostles received their mission to evangelize the world at the same moment that Peter was sent to Rome, the capital of the empire. McShane, *La Romanitas*, p. 89; cf. Bartnik, "L'interprétation théologique…," p. 759. See Leo, *Serm.* 82.3, 29 June 441, p. 354: "When the twelve apostles, in receiving the speech of all languages from the Holy Spirit, had undertaken to fill the world with the Gospel, and the territories of the earth were distributed to them, blessed Peter, chief of the order of the apostles, was assigned to the citadel of the Roman empire." By this act of divine providence, pagan Rome and terrestrial Rome were transformed into a Christian and spiritual Rome. McShane, *La Romanitas*, p. 96.

[90] Leo, *Serm.* 82.3, 29 June 441, p. 354.

[91] Bartnik, "L'interprétation théologique…," p. 750.

[92] Leo, in exalting (Christian) Rome, abolished the Roman myth that was developed by the pagan revival. Bartnik, "L'interprétation théologique…," pp. 758–759. To designate imperial Rome, Leo preferred to use ordinary words such as *res publica*, *regnum*, and *imperium*, rather than *regnum romanum* and *imperium romanum*. Ibid., p. 760.

that Rome, "the mother of error," was, in Leo's words, transformed into "the daughter of truth." The Christian Rome that he envisioned was different from the secular Rome of Augustine and from the providential histories of Orosius or Salvian, because it made the identity and greatness of the city itself depend upon providential intervention. Rome did not really pave the way for the Christian faith; rather, the Christian faith paved the way for Rome to be transformed into the Christian city that it was meant to be.[93] Peter and Paul, not Romulus and Remus, were "the men who raised [Rome] to this glory, … that [Rome] might be made head of the world through the sacred throne of blessed Peter."[94] The practical implications of such a view have been considered by McShane, who argued that Leo, for whom belonging to the church and to the Roman empire were practically synonymous, saw no reason to differentiate two spheres of power occupied by the bishops and emperors.[95] While Augustine imagined the terrestrial and celestial cities as belonging to two separate realms, each of which followed its own logic of justice, Leo envisioned the terrestrial city, Rome, as so thoroughly transformed by its encounter with the Christian faith as to make the Christian city of Rome the template for understanding how divine providence interacted with the world. The terrestrial and celestial spheres were not construed separately by Leo because he was deeply committed to the idea that Christians who used the world for sacred purposes thereby transformed it.

The city of Rome that Leo imagined was a kind of terrestrial and, for that reason, imperfect realization of Augustine's 'city of God'. His new way of construing the world was perhaps a compassionate response to, as Hanson put it, "a time of peculiar misery and wretchedness for masses of people, a period of wrecked houses, displaced persons, enforced movements of populations, economic decline and widespread insecurity and despair."[96] Although divine justice did not operate thoroughly there, Leo's Rome was the place where human suffering might

[93] On the Christian Rome of Leo as a radical departure from the Roman past, see Bartnik, "L'interprétation théologique…," pp. 762–763. For Augustine, the church in its terrestrial form did not preserve the virtues of ancient Rome any better than Rome, the city of Romulus, did. Inglebert, *Les Romains Chrétiens*, p. 498.

[94] Leo, *Serm.* 82.1, 29 June 441, p. 353. Where Ambrose and Prudentius envisioned the new Christian Rome as a continuation of the ancient pagan Rome, Leo imagined a marked separation. McShane, *La Romanitas*, p. 105.

[95] McShane, *La Romanitas*, pp. 55–56.

[96] Hanson, "The Reaction of the Church to the Collapse of the Western Roman Empire in the Fifth Century," pp. 282–283, pp. 284–285.

be transformed into the occasion for altruism and, therefore, the means by which ordinary Christians might imitate the life of Christ. It was also the place where the vagaries of human justice strove to emulate the perfect rationality of the divine plan.[97]

This understanding of Rome was not limited to its geographical boundaries. Because Leo had successfully defended the idea, if not the reality, of the Christian church as a unified entity that reached across the far-flung corners of the empire, it was possible to conceive of Christian altruism and justice extending along the network of churches that he, through his correspondence and papal representatives, had created.[98] That Rome had been transformed by its encounter with Christianity implied that the empire had been similarly transformed. Its secular virtues had been replaced with a Christian *romanitas* that consisted in the humanitarian virtues of *aequitas*, *iustitia*, *lenitas*, *misericors*, *caritas*, *humilitas*, *mansuetudo*, *clementia*, and *humanitas*. Christians who displayed such virtues were not simply uncomfortable sojourners in a transitory world. They were the instruments of the transformation that they had effected, as well as the continuing embodiment of that transformation.

Such encounters with the world might, nonetheless, lead Christians astray. Especially during times of peace Leo feared that Christians might relax the discipline that they had maintained vigilantly in their hardships and thus succumb to vices. When no political enemies threatened the region, he urged his congregations to search "the recesses of their souls" for "the tyrant who wants to rule in the citadel of their spirit."[99] They were not to think that the lull in military campaigns signaled the end of their afflictions. One year before Attila the Hun invaded northern Italy (452) and presumably before he ransacked Gaul (451), Leo warned of the dangers inherent even in the onset of ecclesiastical peace. Although the "storms of earlier disturbances [had] quieted down," Christians were to remain vigilant in order to avoid the dangers that arise from having conquered an adversary whose wily stealth might continue to afflict, with the complacency wrought by pleasure, those whom it had not already destroyed.[100] The 'earlier disturbances' he spoke of were perhaps the ecclesiastical disputes that the Council of Chalcedon had tentatively settled in 451.

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[97] See c. 2.1, above.
[98] See c. 5 and c. 7, above.
[99] Leo, *Serm.* 84b.2, *Gratias, dilectissimi, Domino Deo nostro*, 446–461?, p. 363.
[100] Leo, *Serm.* 36.3.2, *Dies, dilectissimi*, 451, p. 157.

Nearly a decade earlier, 'the dangers of peace' that Leo warned against were merely theoretical. Few Romans would have considered themselves headed toward a life of luxury. The Vandals had recently conquered Roman North Africa (439–442), bringing hardship to the Mediterranean as the money and food supplies that were normally supplied by the region were seriously depleted.[101] When Leo preached to his congregations in 443 about the so-called dangers of peace he meant to reassure them that the afflictions they endured would ultimately benefit them. The model for suffering was, of course, the persecution endured by Christ, whose followers were destined to live a similarly complicated existence, their loyalty divided between the reality of the injustice, lying, and darkness of the world they lived in and the justice, truth, and light of the world they longed for.[102] That is not to suggest that Leo at times conceived of two separate worlds in the manner of Augustine, but that he imagined those who endured the trials of this world as equally engaged in changing it. While conflict was the natural consequence of the Christian existence, its antidote was presumably the discipline and moral rigor both of individual Christians and of the developing network of churches that Leo shaped through a system of laws and decretals.

In equating peace with moral laxness, Leo was repeating a theme familiar to late Roman intellectuals. Sulpitius Severus took it for granted that the decline in the morality and discipline of the Jews in the time of Judah, during whose reign they began to contract marriages from among the conquered, to adopt foreign customs, and to offer sacrifice to idols, was the consequence of the prosperity and tranquillity that had ensued under his successful reign.[103] Augustine applied the same reasoning to the history of republican Rome, the dangerous turning point of which was the destruction of Carthage, which eliminated Rome's one true enemy, the Carthaginians. When the last Punic war had ended (BC 146) and Rome's rival had been destroyed, the Romans no longer experienced the fear that had motivated them to act virtuously.[104] Paradoxically, the overthrow of Carthage, and the peace that

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[101] trans. Freeland, Conway, *St. Leo the Great: Sermons*, Introduction, p. 7.

[102] Leo, *Serm.* 70.5.1, *Sacram, dilectissimi*, 4 February 443, p. 309.

[103] Sulpitius Severus, *Chronicorum libri ii*, I.24. Regarding Samuel's rule over the Herews, Sulpitius said that the fear of the enemy was removed and people, who tend to want what they do not have, longed to be ruled by a king, "a name greatly disliked by almost all free nations." Ibid. I.32.

[104] Inglebert, *Les Romains Chrétiens*, p. 442; Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, III.21. In praising

ensued, was thought to have inflicted more damage upon the republic by undermining its morality and discipline, than the continued hostility.

Although Leo agreed that peace was dangerous, he differed from Augustine and Sulpitius in his understanding of how deeply such periods of relative peace shaped history. While they generally thought that peace and prosperity were responsible for the moral depravity that had compromised the empire, Leo thought that it endangered mainly individuals who might be seduced into relaxing their mental and spiritual discipline. According to this way of thinking, neither peace nor moral laxness was responsible for the barbarian wars, which were rather the result of the perplexing and enigmatic workings of divine justice. He was as unwilling to view these wars as punishment as he was to isolate them in the terrestrial sphere. The middle position he carved was essential to construing history as the place where the laws of justice continued to operate in a way that Christians, though unable to comprehend precisely, might, through the proper exercise of altruism and ecclesiastical discipline, gradually implement. If the Roman world that Leo envisioned in all its complexity was to be shaped and transformed for Christian purposes by those whose eyes had been trained to see, then that of Augustine was to be thoroughly understood, digested, and finally relegated to its diminished place in the celestial hierarchy.

The relationship between Rome and the Christian world that Leo imagined was not antagonistic. It was the Jews, he thought, who had misconstrued this relationship by accusing Jesus of having sought a worldly kingdom.[105] We are told that not even Pilate, a representative of imperial Rome charged with protecting its interests, believed such allegations until the Jews said, "If you pardon him, you are not a friend of Caesar, for anyone who makes himself king goes against Caesar (John 19:12)," thereby persuading him, through intimidation, to charge Jesus with the crime of treason. The facts that Leo adduced to undermine such an accusation were as follows: there was no plan to take power, there were no provisions for equipment or amassing of finances, and no encampments of soldiers had been found. Having concluded that the charge was unfounded, Leo made Jesus, as others had before, the paradigm for construing the relationship between Christianity and empire. Christians were to emulate Jesus, who had "submitted

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the republican form of government, Augustine was similar to Ambrose and Sulpitius Severus. See Inglebert, *Les Romains Chrétiens*, p. 444.

[105] Leo, *Serm.* 61.1, 4 April 445, p. 264.

to 'assessment' and paid the tax," by similarly upholding the imperial laws.[106]

Obeying such laws presumed the same exercise of discipline, though different in content, that ushered in the Christian world. Jesus had not been guilty of treason because the kingdom that he envisioned did not deny the existing empire, but subtly transformed it through the humility, obedience, and care of the sick, poor, and oppressed—the virtues of a new kind of Christian discipline—that were the antitheses to an earthly reign: "He bestowed sight upon the blind, hearing upon the deaf, walking upon the lame, and speech upon the mute. He drove away fevers, relieved sorrows, cast out demons, brought the dead back to life, and commanded both the sea and the winds to quiet down."[107] Although Jesus' humanitarian actions were the work of a divine rather than a political ruler, Leo commended even emperors for releasing from their crimes men who had been justly convicted. Such acts of clemency, no matter who performed them, were to be imitated by Christians.[108] Although imperial Rome was not to be confused with the divine splendor of the heavenly kingdom, it could legitimately serve as a paradigm for Christians to emulate.[109] The implication was that this world might be made, through the humanitarian actions of Christians, to reveal a glimmer of the heavenly kingdom. This commingling of the imperial and Christian worlds was possible because Leo imagined the unfolding of history in linear, rather than dualistic, terms: Christian Rome was not the opponent, but the successor, of pagan Rome, which was to be absorbed gradually and beneficially by it.

Orosius viewed differently the relationship between the worldly and heavenly kingdoms. Deeply committed to the Old Testament conception of justice, whereby the good were rewarded and the wicked punished within the boundaries of history, Orosius believed that the divine retribution of celestial justice shaped human history on a grand scale. Peace was thought to exist due to the world's pious believers, only to be disturbed as punishment for those who blasphemed.[110] The world that he envisioned was the perfect representation of justice. Salvian similarly believed that calamities occurred as just retribution for the Roman

[106] Leo, *Serm.* 61.1, 4 April, 445, p. 264.
[107] Leo, *Serm.* 61.2, 4 April 445, p. 265.
[108] Leo, *Serm.* 40.5.2, *Licet nobis*, 1 March 442, p. 175.
[109] Leo, *Serm.* 40.5.2, 1 March 442, p. 175.
[110] Orosius, *Historiarum adversum paganos libri vii*, VII.3.

world, which, no matter how gravely affected by heavenly punishment, was never fully corrected.[111] The logical consequences of his argument unfolded as he enumerated the virtues of the barbarian invaders, who, "unlike the Romans," corrected their baseness by removing from every place in Africa the "lowly vice of effeminate men" and by abstaining from contact with prostitutes, the reward for which was their military and political success in conquering the Romans.[112] Salvian construed the operations of divine retribution so rigidly that every change in worldly fortunes was interpreted as the just and inevitable impress of divine providence. We have already seen that Augustine departed from this Old Testament way of thinking by ascribing perfect justice only to the citizens of the heavenly kingdom, whose piety was the celestial counterpart to the virtues exhibited by the pagan citizens of Rome.[113] Justice operated in human history roughly, as the reward for Rome's virtues and the punishment for its vices that was distributed not according to individual, but to collective, merit. The present world was only the faintest reflection of the heavenly city.

Leo's understanding of the relationship between Rome and the Christian world was neither the Old Testament view of justice proposed by Orosius and Salvian, nor the more radical separation of the two imagined by Augustine. Thoroughly committed to the idea that Christian Rome had been, and would continue to be, saved from its barbarian invaders, Leo believed that the saints of the city, especially Peter and Paul, were responsible for delivering the city from ruin. After Alaric sacked Rome on 28 August 410 and the city was saved the event was commemorated annually to express the gratitude of the Romans. During the first years of Leo's episcopacy (441–442), before the treaty was signed with Geiseric and as the Vandals threatened Rome, his congregations attended this celebration in large numbers.[114] But after the treaty was signed in 442 and the Roman Christians felt safer, attendance apparently dwindled and their discipline faltered. Leo chastised his congregations for failing to acknowledge the real heroes of Rome: "Who restored this city to safety? Who snatched it from captivity? Who

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[111] Salvian, *De gubernatione Dei*, VI.16. For Salvian, the Goths and Vandals were "better Christians than the Roman." Lambert, "The Barbarians in Salvian's *De Gubernatione Dei*," pp. 109–111.

[112] Salvian, *De gubernatione Dei*, VII.22, VII.11, VII.15. See J.J. O'Donnell, "Salvian and Augustinus," *Augustinian Studies* 14 (1983), pp. 27–32.

[113] Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, V.16.

[114] trans. Freeland, Conway, *St. Leo the Great: Sermons*, p. 360.

protected it from slaughter? Was it the games of the circus, or the watchful care of saints? Most certainly, it was by their prayers that the sentence of divine judgment was appeased."[115] Only by the intervention of the saints, the true patrons and protectors of Rome, was the city thought to have been spared from the destruction that might have occurred without the appropriate prayers. The Christian Roman world that Leo imagined was not to bear the harsh impress of divine retribution, but the gentle contours and subtle nuances of divine mercy.

The optimism that characterized Leo's letters and sermons and that distinguished his understanding of the late Roman world from that of his contemporaries can be attributed to his commitment to the idea of Rome as a city transformed, from its pagan origins beginning with Romulus and Remus, to its Christian rebirth beginning with the mission of Peter and Paul. The content of that rebirth was revealed in Leo's thoughts on christology and the person of Christ; on church organization and discipline; on poverty and the care of the poor; on justice, ecclesiastical law, and mercy; on the primacy of Rome; and on the theology of history. Rome would survive its barbarian invaders because the Christian Rome that Leo imagined was no longer merely the sum of its buildings and monuments. Augustine had reached a similar conclusion but for different reasons, having reduced, as McShane has observed, the Rome of stone—the symbol, the idea that was so important to his contemporaries—to nothing.[116] Christians were to despise the temporal world in favor of the heavenly kingdom.

Leo did not reduce Rome to nothing. He replaced the old idea of a secular Rome as the center of an empire burdened with migrating and conquering barbarians with the new idea of a Christian Rome as the center of a network of churches connected by a common ideology. The content of that ideology was the Christian virtues that I have enumerated, the *aequitas*, *iustitia*, *lenitas*, *misericors*, *caritas*, *humilitas*, *mansuetudo*, *clementia*, and *humanitas*. To save themselves, their ideas, and institutions

[115] Leo, *Serm.* 84.1, *Religiosam devotionem*, 30 August or 6 September 442, p. 361. Salvian described the horrors of the games most vividly, reporting that every crime and vice was found at the games, where people thought it enjoyable to watch men die, or even worse, to watch them being torn to shreds, the bellies of wild animals being filled with human flesh. He bristled at the pleasure of onlookers, who devoured men no less by their looks than by the teeth of beasts. Salvian, *De gubernatione Dei*, VI.2; cf. ibid., VI.3–11; on his rhetorical treatment of history, see J. Blänsdorf, *Salvian über Gallien und Karthago: zu Realismus und Rhetorik in der spätantiken Literatur, Studien zu Gregor von Nyssa und der christlichen Spätantike* (Leiden, 1990), pp. 311–332. See also Tertullian, *De Spectaculis*.

[116] McShane, *La Romanitas*, pp. 39–40.

from the ruins of imperial Rome, Christians were not to detach themselves from the symbol that had defined the city itself, but to transform it in the humanitarian way that Leo envisioned. His new understanding of Rome was the means by which Christians might, through acts of charity, mercy, justice, and compassion, and by subscribing to the theological views that he imparted, use the world to serve its divine purpose. The material for that transformation was especially abundant during Leo's episcopacy, when the Huns and Vandals threatened Rome and the human suffering that was Jesus' experience on the Cross entered history.[117]

[117] On the relationship between the passion of Christ and the suffering of humanity after the invasion of the Huns, see Bartnik, "L'interprétation théologique…," p. 779.

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